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CHRONOLOGY OF THE FOURTH-CENTURY METROPOLITANS OF SELEUCIA-CTESIPHON

By MARTIN J. HIGGINS

I.

The metropolitans of Seleucia-Ctesiphon for the fourth century comprise Papa, Simeon bar Sabbae, Shahdost, Barbashmin followed by a long vacancy, Tomarsa, Qayuma, and Isaac. The parallel Sassanids were Sapor II (309-379), Ardashir II (379-83), Sapor III (383-88), Bahram IV (388-99) and Yezdegerd I (399-420).

The list of catholici is preserved in a number of different writers: PsEN (c. s. x), ChrS (c. 1036), Mari (c. 1150), PsED (c. 1260), BarH (1286), Amri (c. 1350), Sliba (c. 1350), and others.¹

The chronology has already been studied by G. Westphal² in connection

¹ Ps(eudo-)E(lias) N(isibenus) is prefixed by El(ias) Nis(ibenus) to his *Opus chronologicum*, tr. by E. W. Brooks (CSCO 63; Rome-Paris-Leipzig 1910) 27f. This list is usually quoted as Elias' own, but it was not drawn up by him nor does it even receive the stamp of his approval. For instance, it synchronizes 4 Sapor I with 557 Sel. (p. 27) and sets 1 Tomarsa in 1 Bahram IV (p. 28), while Elias himself makes 1 Sapor I parallel with 553 Sel. (p. 45) and 1 Tomarsa with 1 Sapor III (p. 51). In fact, ElNis follows Ishodenah of Basra (cf. p. 51) and discards what I call here PsEN. The author of the latter lived after Ishodenah (c. 850; for the date, cf. A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, Bonn 1922, 234), whom he quotes (p. 27), and, of course, before ElNis (c. 1050; cf. Baumstark 287), but is otherwise unknown. His name was probably mentioned by ElNis, but the beginning of the catalogue has been lost through mutilation of the MS.

Chr(onicle of) S(eert), ed. and tr. by A. Scher and J. Périer (PO 4.219-312; Paris 1908), by A. Scher and P. Dib (PO 5.221-334; Paris 1910); for the date, cf. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur II* (Studi e Testi 133; Vatican City 1947) 195.

Mari, Amri and Sliba, *De patriarchis nestorianorum commentaria*, ed. and tr. by H. Gismondi, S.J. (2 vols. Rome 1896-99); for the dates, cf. Graf 200, 216f. These authors are cited here by page and line, though Gismondi does not number the lines, because a reference to page alone would be too vague. The page averages 44 lines, so the reader can readily gauge just about where to locate a passage without counting the lines himself.

Ps(eudo-)E(lias) D(amascenus) in J. S. Assemani, *B(ibliotheca) O(rientalis clementino-vaticana) II* (Rome 1721) 392; for date and identity, cf. Graf 134.

(Gregory) Bar H(ebraeus), *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, ed. and tr. with notes by J. B. Abbe-loos and T. J. Lamy III (Paris-Louvain 1877); for the date, cf. Baumstark 313.

Additional lists are given by Ass. BO II 388-92 and E. Sachau, *Verzeichniss der syrischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek Berlin I* (Berlin 1899) 232, 233f.; these are not cited here because they contain no dates (Skehan).

The present writer is not familiar with the Semitic languages and all references are to translations. The writer's colleague, Rev. Patrick Skehan, S.T.D., has been kind enough to check the original wherever it seemed necessary, and this is indicated by putting his name in parentheses after the item concerned.

² *Untersuchungen über die Quellen und die Glaubwürdigkeit der Patriarchenchroniken des*

with his investigation of the sources and reliability of Mari, Amri and Sliba. He bases his dates principally on the Syriac acts of the Persian martyrs, but, as the present paper attempts to prove, this cannot be done: we must work the other way around, settle first the succession of the catholici and then turn to the acts. Furthermore, since the publication of his excellent work, the very valuable ChrS has been discovered and a critical edition of PsEN has appeared.

We shall discuss the catalogue of the metropolitans in two main divisions, (1) Papa through the vacancy after Barbashmin, and (2) Tomarsa to the accession of Isaac. We shall see that the chroniclers enumerated above all derive their information ultimately from a common source, but with divergences that amount to textual variants and that may be treated as such. In each instance, therefore, we first attempt to restore the original reading, so to speak. We thus discover two strata, a corrupt 'secondary list,' and a 'primary list,' that commands high respect. The results of this 'textual criticism' we then compare with independent authorities. The method is feasible because of the very peculiar relationship of our annalists; all are interdependent, but no two are alike.³ They contain numerous inconsistencies, which almost invariably indicate that they have tried to combine authors that disagree. Frequently, too, they have recourse to 'conjecture,' by which is meant arbitrary change of the records to accommodate them either to the context or to prejudice, and they incorporate 'conjecture' in their narrative on precisely the same footing as a quotation from a document. Though for convenience in the present paper Mari and Amri are spoken of as employing ChrS, this is not exact. According to Westphal,⁴ their original was Syriac, not Arabic. However, they do seem virtually to copy ChrS, so the latter must represent a very close translation of the common source.

Certain continually recurring difficulties in interpreting the numerals also call for preliminary comment. One such arises from the interchange of cardinal and ordinal; e.g., Amri places Simeon's martyrdom in his 18th yr., but, since he dates him 637-55 Sel., he means after 18 yrs. and so should speak of his 19th yr.⁵ Another consists of rounding out fractions into whole numbers — a fatal procedure where lists are concerned. The oriental reckoning synchronizes the monarch's years with the calendar.⁶ E.g., Hormisdas II

Mari ibn Sulaiman, Amr ibn Matai und Saliba ibn Johannan: I. Abschnitt, bis zum Beginn des nestorianischen Streites (Diss. Strasbourg) (Kirchain N.-L. 1901).

³ This question is discussed at length below, pp. 88-94.

⁴ 18f. A clear proof of Westphal's view occurs *infra*, p. 71.

⁵ 9, 11.

⁶ For the Persian calendar, reduction of dates to the corresponding Julian, etc., cf. Martin J. Higgins, *The Persian War of the Emperor Maurice, Part I: The Chronology, with a Brief History of the Persian Calendar* (Diss. Washington 1939) 1-23.

died on Jan. 8, 310,⁷ and his son, Sapor II, succeeded; 2 Sapor II was counted, not from the anniversary of the succession, Jan. 8, 311, but from the first ensuing Persian New Year, Sept. 10, 310; 3 Sapor II from Sept. 10, 311, and so on; in a catalogue of kings, Sapor would receive all of Sept. 10, 309/10 as his first year, while his predecessor would be calculated only to the end of the last full year, i.e., only to Sept. 10, 309; when a sum like 70 yrs., 11 mos. and some days is given as the length of Sapor II's reign,⁸ the extra months and days indicate the unfinished portion of his last year, i.e., that he died some days after July 24, 380; thus, his tenure was computed from Sept. 10, 309 to Aug. 23, 379, i.e., a total of exactly 70 full (Persian) years, though he actually ruled from Jan. 8, 310 until after July 24, 380. Of course, the principle must be rigidly adhered to by the historian or all sorts of confusion is engendered. E.g., ChrS rounds out the 70 yrs., 11 mos. and some days to 71 full yrs., and must then compensate by reducing Bahram IV from 11 to 10 yrs.; naturally, he ought next to readjust every date for Ardashir II, Sapor III and Bahram IV, but he does nothing of the sort, and the inconsistencies indicate, as we have said above, that he took the chronology of Sapor II and his immediate successors from one work, but the date for the various events associated with them from another author entirely.⁹ The situation is further complicated by the uncertainties of the text of PsEN and Amri. The former, for instance, now reads, 'Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 1-8 Bahram IV,' but originally had, '1-9 Bahram IV,' the scribe changing the king's year deliberately to point out that the list presupposes too long a reign for that monarch.¹⁰ The illogicality thus created differs from that just mentioned in ChrS in that it is conscious, and I prefer to call it a 'conflation' — to borrow a term from Westcott-Hort —, because its design is to preserve the traditional catalogue and at the same suggest an error in it. Here (we shall, of course, discuss this later) we happen to be in a position to restore the text, but, in other cases, we can't tell which of two or three possibilities is intended by the 'conflation.' Finally, Sliba copies Amri slavishly with variants; Amri's editor puts within square brackets Sliba's alterations so far as known from the collation of the MSS, but some details not so marked off must, I believe, be ascribed to Sliba.

⁷ Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden, aus der arabischen Chronik des Tabari übersetzt und mit ausführlichen Erläuterungen und Ergänzungen versehen* (Leiden 1879) 417, gives 5 (Persian) mos. as the interval between the beginning of Hormisdas' last year, Sept. 10, 309, and his death.

⁸ ChrS V 260.

⁹ *Infra*, p. 64.

¹⁰ *Infra*, p. 65.

II.

The first part of the list, from Papa through the long vacancy after Barbashmin, is arranged in the various writers as follows:¹¹

PsEN: Papa, died, according to Timotheus I, 20 Sapor II; Simeon, died 31 Sapor; vacancy, 3 mos.; Shahdost, 2 yrs.; Barbashmin, 7 yrs., 'after 7 yrs. Sapor took and killed him'; vacancy, '37 yrs. of Sapor to 1 Bahram IV.'

ChrS: Papa (?) (MS mutilated); Simeon, 18 yrs. to 31 Sapor; vacancy, indefinite; Shahdost, 2 yrs., 5 mos.; Barbashmin, 12 yrs. or 7 yrs., 11 mos. i.e., 7 yrs. tenure and 11 mos. imprisonment (his contemporary, Qardag, was martyred in 49 Sapor); vacancy, 33 yrs., 39 Sapor to 1 Bahram IV (Tomarsa's contemporary, Bokhtisho, was martyred by Bahram IV).

Mari: Papa, died under Sapor II; Simeon, 18 yrs.;¹² vacancy, indefinite; Shahdost, 2 yrs., 5 mos.; Barbashmin, 10 yrs. or 3 yrs. (contemporary of Qardag); vacancy, 22 yrs. to Yezdegerd I (Tomarsa put under Yezdegerd I, but his contemporary, Bokhtisho, martyred under Bahram IV).

BarH: Papa, condemned in synod 9 yrs. after Council of Nicaea, died 1 yr. later, 'not 12 yrs. as some erroneously say'; Simeon, 13 yrs., died 31 Sapor (by implication);¹³ vacancy, 3 mos.; Shahdost, 2 yrs.; Barbashmin, 7 yrs., 11 mos. (like ChrS); vacancy, indefinite; after death of Sapor II, his son, Bahram IV, succeeded.

Amri: Papa, died 18 Sapor II, 637 Sel.; Simeon, 18 yrs., consecrated 6 Sapor at time of synod against Papa, martyred 655 Sel., 36 Sapor (by inference);¹⁴ vacancy, 3 yrs.; Shahdost, 2 yrs, 5 mos.; Barbashmin, 7 yrs., or 7 yrs., 11 mos. (like ChrS and BarH), or 8 yrs. (contemporary of Qardag martyred in 49 Sapor); vacancy, 31 yrs. to 1 Bahram IV.

Sliba (same as Amri to Simeon): vacancy after Simeon, 4 yrs., 655-59 Sel.; Shahdost, 2 yrs., 659-61 Sel.; vacancy, 3 yrs., 661-64 Sel.; Barbashmin, 8 yrs., 664-72 Sel.; vacancy, 31 yrs. to 1 Bahram IV, 672-703 Sel.; Sapor II reigned 72 yrs. and was succeeded by his son, Bahram IV (MSS attribute to Amri).

The description of the long vacancy,¹⁵ especially, demonstrates the close

¹¹ The references for the following are given in connection with the detailed discussion below.

¹² Mari 15.42 says that Simeon died 'in the ninth year'; this should read 'ninth hour'; cf. ChrS IV 303.

¹³ *Infra*, p. 54.

¹⁴ Simeon's 18 yrs. run 637-55 Sel.; therefore, 18-36 Sapor II.

¹⁵ ChrS V 224, 305-7; PsEN 28; ElNis 51; Mari 24.17, 23; BarH 46; Amri and Sliba 12:20-23, 26, 29. As stated above, p. 47, the 'conflations' of PsEN's corrector are difficult to interpret. Here, for instance, does he agree with ChrS' original that Sapor II reigned 71 yrs.? or does he assign Sapor only 70 yrs.? and, if so, is he then suggesting that 1 Tomarsa coincided with 2 Sapor III? or is he rather hinting that the vacancy began in 38, not 39, Sapor II? My own opinion is that the 'conflation' has no implications at all beyond

interrelationship of the foregoing writers; they all alike share an extraordinary error. The parent text, from which the rest descend, is still preserved intact by ChrS, namely, that the interregnum lasted 33 yrs. from 39 Sapor II to 1 Bahram IV. The statement evidently assigns 71 full yrs. to Sapor, and takes for granted that that king was immediately succeeded by Bahram IV; Ardashir II and Sapor III are skipped over entirely and, apparently, Sapor II has been confused with Sapor III. Precisely the same reading has been 'conflated' in PsEN into '37 yrs. of Sapor II to 1 Bahram IV.' It is also assumed here that, after the death of Barbashmin, Sapor II ruled continuously until the accession of Bahram IV. A corrector has emended by adding 4 yrs. of Ardashir II and thus suggests that the interruption of the patriarchate should terminate with the reign of Sapor III, as in ElNis himself. The mistake recurs in BarH as an explicit assertion, and is implied in Mari's association of Tomarsa with Bokhtisho. Amri, however, eliminates all the inaccuracies; the interval, 31 yrs. from 49 Sapor II to 1 Bahram IV, not only allows for the intervening monarchs, but also allots Sapor II only 70, not 71, yrs. But this rearrangement still remains under the influence of the blunder, because it still retains 1 Bahram as the *terminus ad quem*. Consequently, Amri has made a conjectural restoration, and it is easy to see that his point of departure has been the same reading as that in ChrS: since his source calls Barbashmin a contemporary of Qardag, martyred in 49 Sapor, Amri assumes that 39 Sapor is a scribe's oversight for 49 Sapor, and, knowing the true series of the Sassanids, regards 33 as a slip of the pen for 31, a figure he may also have found in his source but in connection with a different catalogue. He is followed by Sliba. Mari, however, though he retains traces of the parent text, has abandoned it altogether for an interregnum of 22 yrs. immediately preceding the accession of Yezdegerd I; to the origin and significance of this detail we shall return later.¹⁶ Amri,¹⁷ after exercising all his ingenuity to correct the chronology, would scarcely have inserted something so much at variance with it as the affirmation that Sapor II had 72 yrs. and was immediately succeeded by Bahram IV. This statement, though made

the factor immediately involved; in this case, for instance, it points out that the interregnum did not end with the death of Sapor II but was prolonged 4 yrs. more until after the demise of Ardashir II, and it abstracts entirely from the question as to how long Sapor II occupied the throne. This conclusion is based on the treatment of Tomarsa's tenure; cf. *infra*, n. 46. Into Amri's text, Gismondi, the editor, inserts figures in parentheses, e.g., (21) after 31 yrs. for the vacancy, and (39) after 49 Sapor II. Presumably, these are intended as emendations; at all events, the original reads 31 and 49 resp. (Skehan). Qardag is called a contemporary of Barbashmin and his martyrdom in 49 Sapor is related in close connection with the metropolitan's by ChrS 225, 227; Mari 18.39 (without date); Amri 12.11, 14.

¹⁶ *Infra*, p. 69.

¹⁷ 12.21, 26f., 29.

twice and attributed by the manuscripts each time to Amri, must belong to Sliba. The same applies to the figure, 703 Sel., for 1 Bahram IV, as can readily be seen from a comparison of the summaries above. Sliba,¹⁸ in fact, follows a most bizarre procedure, imperturbably adding to his Sel. yrs. without the slightest reference to the fact that at 703 Sel. (391/92), even if he allows Sapor II 72 yrs., he has already gotten 1 yr. beyond what should be his own date for Bahram's inauguration, and 3 yrs. beyond Amri's — and the correct — 1 Bahram V (388/89).

For the *catholici* from Simeon to the vacancy,¹⁹ some elements of the parent text can be readily deduced. To Shahdost, PsEN, BarH and Sliba assign 2 yrs.; ChrS, Mari and Amri, 2 yrs. 5 mos. To Barbashmin, PsEN, ChrS and Amri allot 7 yrs.; ChrS and Amri, also 7 yrs. 11 mos.; BarH, 7 yrs. 11 mos. Since the whole numbers would alone be retained in a continuous catalogue, all agree on 2 yrs. for Shahdost and 7 yrs. for Barbashmin, which, therefore, must come from the basic list. It was evidently taken for granted, too, that the terms did not include the periods of imprisonment, which become the extra 5 and 11 mos., respectively, above. As for Mari, it should be noted that Sliba puts a vacancy of 3 yrs. between Shahdost and Barbashmin, and Mari's 3-yr. tenure for the latter merely confuses the vacancy with the tenure, and his 10 yrs. combines it with the received 7 yrs. Amri, followed by Sliba, rounds out the 7 yrs. 11 mos. into 8 yrs. Furthermore, all agree on another point, an interregnum after Simeon, though they disagree on its length, indefinite in ChrS and Mari, 3 mos. in PsEN and BarH, 3 yrs. in Amri, 4 yrs. in Sliba. Again, PsEN, ChrS and BarH end Simeon's episcopate at 31 Sapor. Consequently, the immediate ancestor of all these lists ran: Simeon, died 31 Sapor; vacancy, 3 mos.; Shahdost, 2 yrs.; Barbashmin, 7 yrs. to 39 Sapor II. The 3-yr. and 4-yr. intervals inserted by Mari and Sliba and the alternate tenure of 12 yrs. for Barbashmin in ChrS, incompatible with the limits 31-39 Sapor II, must have come from some other source. Amri follows the basic list so far as he can. He knows the correct date for Simeon's martyrdom, 36 Sapor,²⁰ and he conjectures 49 Sapor for Barbashmin's, and, to fill in the 13 yrs., he rounds out the latter's tenure to 8 yrs., and substitutes the 3-yr. for the 3-mo. vacancy after Simeon. Nothing forced him to shift

¹⁸ (Amri) 11.34; 12.2, 7, 22, 29. The reckoning continues incorrect down to the reign of Chosroes I; cf. Westphal 123f.

¹⁹ PsEN 27f.; ChrS IV 305, 311; V 221f., 224; BarH 38, 42; Mari 16.15; 17.13; 18.31 (read *decem* for *duodecim*: Skehan); 24.16; Amri and Sliba 11.32, 34; 12.1f., 7-11, 19, 22. Amri says actually that Shahdost was arrested in his 2nd yr., which, I presume, represents again the interchange of cardinal and ordinal; cf. *supra*, p. 46. Moreover, he does not state explicitly that he assigns 8 yrs. to Barbashmin, but this is implied in the parallel Sel. dates given by Sliba, 664-72 Sel.

²⁰ 11.28; cf. Martin J. Higgins, 'Aphraates' Dates for the Persian Persecution,' *Byz. Ztschr.* 44 (1951) 271.

the interregnum from after to before Shahdost, since either position would have served his purpose as well, but he wished, apparently, to preserve the order of the parent text, and, presumably, regarded the change of 3 mos. to 3 yrs. as, under the circumstances, an entirely legitimate emendation.

The immediate point of departure for all these lists, therefore, was as follows: Simeon, died 31 Sapor II;²¹ vacancy, 3 mos.; Shahdost, 2 yrs.; Barbashmin, 7 yrs. to 39 Sapor. Why does the inconsistency exist, an interval of only 8 yrs., 31-39 Sapor, for a total of 9 yrs.? Where did the figures for the two metropolitans come from? Why do Mari and Sliba insert a 3-yr. vacancy between them? Why does Sliba increase the interregnum before Shahdost from 3 mos. to 4 yrs.? Why does ChrS assign 12 yrs. to Barbashmin? The natural place to expect the answer to all these questions is the acts.²² The Passion of Shahdost relates that he and his companions were arrested in 2 Persecution, held 5 mos. and then condemned, the companions being martyred on lunar Shebat (Febr.) 20, also regarded as the anniversary of Shahdost himself, though he was executed later; Barbashmin is said in his acts to have been seized in Shebat, 6 Persecution, imprisoned 11 mos. and put to death on lunar II Kanun (Jan.) 9. First of all, the late writers knew nothing of the Perso-Syriac calendar, so we may feel confident that they had no way of arriving at the true chronology, and that, furthermore, they, like the synaxaries, interpreted the dates as Julian, not lunar.²³ That they followed the oriental reckoning, may also be taken for granted, particularly since the parent list contained only whole numbers; so they would have synchronized the metropolitan's years with the civil calendar, i.e., made both them and the Era of Persecution coincide with Sel., as Elias of Nisibis does with the Sassanid monarchs.²⁴ Again, our chronicles²⁵ show no trace of 30 or 32 Sapor as the year of Simeon's death, but have only 31 Sapor, i.e., 651 Sel. (339/40). Shahdost, then, was captured in 2 Pers., 32 Sapor, 652 Sel. (340/41), and executed 5 mos. later on Febr. 20. The date of arrest

²¹ PsEN 27; ChrS IV 297 (cf. 300); BarH implies the same yr.; cf. *infra*, p. 54.

²² *Acta Martyrum orientalium* (i.e., *Acta MM orientalium et occidentalium* I) ed. and tr. with notes and intr. by S. E. Assemani (Rome 1748) 89f., 91, 111, 114, 117; *Ausgewählte Akten persischer Märtyrer aus dem Syrischen übersetzt* by O. Braun (Bibliothek der Kirchenväter; Kempten-Munich n.d.) 94, 96, 100, 101, 104 (the original reads *lunar* II Kanun: Skehan).

²³ Higgins, *Persian War* 17f.

²⁴ Nöldeke, *Tab.* (cf. *supra*, n. 7) 408.

²⁵ ChrS in two passages from obviously the same source (IV 288, 297) says that Sapor began the persecution in his 31st yr. after the death of Constantine. However, it states elsewhere (IV 251) that Constantine died in 30 Sapor. This assertion comes from a different authority and stands in a context having nothing whatever to do with the Persian persecution but dealing with the heresiarch Arius. This is the only trace, if trace it can be called, of any date other than 31 Sapor for the beginning of the persecution.

will be Oct. if Febr. is included in the 5 mos., otherwise Sept. He was, then, either taken in Oct., the first month of 2 Pers., 32 Sapor, 652 Sel., and martyred in Febr. of the same year, or seized in Sept., the last month of 2 Pers., 32 Sapor, 652 Sel., and killed in Febr. of the following year, 3 Pers., 33 Sapor, 653 Sel. If we suppose that he was elected in the same year as Simeon's death, i.e., 1 Pers., 31 Sapor, 651 Sel., we may, then, reckon his term at either 1 or 2 yrs., either 31-32 Sapor, 651-52 Sel., or 31-33 Sapor, 651-53 Sel. Barbashmin, jailed in Febr. of 6 Pers., 36 Sapor, 656 Sel., was beheaded on Jan. 9, 7 Pers., 37 Sapor, 657 Sel., and, depending on whether he was consecrated only a short while before his detention or immediately after his predecessor, the following combinations arise: Shahdost, 1 yr., 31-32 Sapor, 651-52 Sel.; vacancy, 4 yrs., 32-36 Sapor, 652-56 Sel.; Barbashmin, 1 yr., 36-37 Sapor, 656-57 Sel.: *or*, Shahdost, 1 yr., 31-32 Sapor, 651-52 Sel.; Barbashmin, 5 yrs., 32-37 Sapor, 652-57 Sel.: *or*, Shahdost, 2 yrs., 31-33 Sapor, 651-53 Sel.; vacancy, 3 yrs., 33-36 Sapor, 653-56 Sel.; Barbashmin, 1 yr., 36-37 Sapor, 656-657 Sel.: *or*, Shahdost, 2 yrs., 31-33 Sapor, 651-53 Sel.; Barbashmin, 4 yrs., 33-37 Sapor, 653-57 Sel.

The third of these variations provides the key to at least the 3-yr. interregnum after Shahdost in Mari and Sliba, and the 3 mos. of the other writers may, as Amri guesses, be nothing but the same figure transposed and shortened. Sliba's 4-yr. interval before Shahdost might also be explained analogously, if we indulge in the far-fetched hypothesis that he knew of the first variation above, and, either to preserve a hint of it, i.e., by 'conflation,' or merely by confusion, shifted the vacancy. However, neither these items, nor Barbashmin's 12-yr. term in ChrS, whatever their origin, can possibly have formed part of the basic list adopted by our chronicles, because, as already mentioned, they are incompatible with its limits, 31-39 Sapor. They constitute fragments of entirely different arrangements, and are interesting only as showing that rival patriarchal catalogues had once upon a time existed. At all events, to turn back to our main problem, though the above combinations may account for the 3-mo. interregnum after Simeon, and would certainly make clear why Shahdost was given a term of 2 yrs., yet, not one of them reveals how Barbashmin received 7 yrs.; even if we eliminated Shahdost altogether, Barbashmin could have held office for 6 yrs. at the most, 31-37 Sapor, 651-657 Sel., as he survived for only 3 mos., Oct. to Jan. 9, of his 7th and last yr. Of course, there is another possibility. It may be that the author of the basic list did not bother his head about calculations, but, observing simply that Shahdost had died in 2 Pers. and Barbashmin in 7 Pers., took for granted that their yrs. in office were coextensive with the yrs. Pers., interchanged cardinal and ordinal, and without more ado came up with 2 yrs. for the one and 7 yrs. for the other. This is conceivable, but it is crude — too crude, in fact, to credit.

If the acts won't account for Barbashmin's 7-yr. term, neither will they help with the other basic problem, the inconsistency, viz., of a total of 9 yrs. for Shahdost and his successor, but only 8 yrs. to accommodate them, 31-39 Sapor II.²⁶ As we have just seen, the longest period that can be obtained from the acts is 31-37 Sapor, and it has to suffice for both metropolitans. The chronicler could, I presume, reconcile himself to the discrepancy by interchanging cardinal and ordinal, i.e., by equating 9 with 9th (we meet with an indisputable instance of such manipulation later on). But we cannot subscribe to that solution; the foregoing paragraph proves that the numerals were generally regarded as representing full yrs. Our writers, it should be recalled, show no trace of such alternates for Simeon's martyrdom as 30 or 32 Sapor, so we'd have no ground for thinking of any original like 30-39 Sapor. Again, the acts have the persecution endure for 40 yrs. and this statement must have exercised some influence.²⁷ In fact, Amri's 31-yr. interregnum would correspond exactly to the 9-yr. aggregate assigned universally to Shahdost and Barbashmin, and would suggest that 31-40 Sapor once stood in the primary compilation alongside 31-39 Sapor, or instead of it. But all this may be mere coincidence. Not a vestige remains of any 32-yr. interregnum to accompany ChrS' 8-yr. aggregate; on the contrary, ChrS, rather than shorten the vacancy in the patriarchate, seems to have preferred to lengthen the reign of Sapor — an excellent reason for believing that no one had ever proposed a 31-40 Sapor. On the other hand, no variant in the texts permits one to lay a finger on the tenure of either Shahdost or Barbashmin, save, perhaps, the very vague and uncertain hint in Sliba that someone may have reduced the former to 1 yr. — manifestly insufficient to warrant the assumption that ChrS' total allowed only that. In short, we have no proof that the chronicle tradition had ever settled upon a consistent chronology and, if we try to see through the present confusion to its cause, we discover that the evidence is too scant and equivocal. We must, therefore, conclude that the catalogue contained two enigmas, a 7-yr. tenure for Barbashmin and a faulty synchronism of the patriarchs with the Sassanids, and we cannot account for the origin of either.

At all events, the immediate ancestor of all the above lists ran as follows: Simeon, died 31 Sapor II; vacancy, 3 mos.; Shahdost, 2 yrs.; Barbashmin, 7 yrs., to 39 Sapor II; vacancy, 33 yrs., 39 Sapor II to 1 Bahram IV. This is what I have called the corrupt 'secondary list.' It may be instantly dismissed as worthless; it is self-contradictory; it skips over Ardashir II and Sapor III altogether. We know from fragments in ChrS, Mari and Sliba

²⁶ Cf. *infra*, nn. 42, 82.

²⁷ *Infra*, p. 87. However, the figure is actually mentioned only by ChrS IV 298; the rest ignore it entirely.

that rival schemes had existed, and Amri revised it completely on the basis of conjecture, keeping what he could but eliminating its gross inconsistencies and errors.

Now, the 'secondary list' superseded a document, designated here as the 'primary list,' of high antiquity and authority, some relics of which have been preserved by Amri.²⁸ They concern the career of Simeon bar Sabbae, the date of his consecration in connection with the synod against Papa, 6 Sapor II, of his accession upon the latter's demise, 18 Sapor II, and of his death, 36 Sapor II. Reminiscences of this same chronology persist elsewhere, e.g., in the alternates for Simeon's tenure, 18 yrs. in ChrS and Mari, 13 yrs. in an anonymous writer copied by BarH. The difference between the two, 5 yrs., corresponds to the difference between the two dates assigned for the martyrdom, 36 and 31 Sapor; so the one presupposes 18-36 Sapor, and the other 18-31 Sapor. Moreover, another passage in ChrS shows distinct traces of the original catalogue. Consequently, we cannot doubt that the 'primary list' once formed part of the chronicle tradition, and that Amri did not introduce it from some outside work.

The remarkable fact that the true year of Simeon's execution stood in this 'primary list' almost of itself constitutes proof of its reliability. Furthermore, its notice for the synod against Papa finds abundant corroboration in the comparatively numerous sources for that event. The determination of the first catholicus of Seleucia-Ctesiphon to make his see the foremost in Persia roused a storm of opposition. A group of unruly and unscrupulous bishops, so runs the story in the record of the council of Dadisho,²⁹ by slander and deceit prejudiced against the metropolitan such worthy prelates as Miles and others, who were good men but simple and gullible. All gathered in a synod at Seleucia-Ctesiphon to try Papa. In one of the sessions, he, in a fit of rage and frustration at these dupes, struck the gospel book with his open hand, adjured it 'Speak, Gospel, speak!' and was instantly paralyzed. This,

²⁸ 9.15, 20 (read *sexto* for *decimo sexto*: Skehan); 11.28 (cf. *supra*, n. 20); ChrS IV 304; Mari 16.1; BarH 36 (cf. *supra*, n. 21). ChrS associates the attack on Nisibis with the beginning of the persecution in 31 Sapor (IV 288, 297), but he says (IV 299) that the persecution lasted 6 yrs. in the neighborhood of Nisibis before Simeon's death. This brings us down to 37 Sapor, unless the statement came from the same source that dated the attack on Nisibis in 30 Sapor (cf. *supra*, n. 25). At all events, it is obviously a reminiscence of the true year of Simeon's martyrdom. Westphal, p. 83, seems to overlook the fact that Amri himself gives 18 yrs. for Simeon's tenure, thus making clear that he counts it only from Papa's death. Westphal (p. 84) hesitates to conclude that Papa was deposed; but he must have been for Simeon to be consecrated as his successor; cf. J. Labourt, *Le christianisme dans l'empire perse sous la dynastie sassanide (224-632)* (Bibliothèque de l'enseignement de l'histoire ecclésiastique; Paris 1904) 23.

²⁹ *Synodicon orientale*, ed. and tr. with intr. and notes by J.-B. Chabot (Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibl. Nat. et d'autres bibl. 37; Paris 1902) 289-91.

of course, was taken as a visible portent of divine displeasure, he was deposed, and Simeon bar Sabbae was consecrated, apparently against his own will, to supersede him. On appeal, the western Fathers instituted a minute review of the entire case, then annulled the whole proceedings, reinstated Papa, made Simeon coadjutor with right of succession, and dealt very severely with the ringleaders. Of the virtuous bishops, however, who had been hoodwinked, part had been martyred, part had died in excellent repute.

This account contains no exact information about the time of events, but ChrArb³⁰ does furnish some indications. Its version of the episode makes Simeon bar Sabbae the center of opposition. Papa's position as ordinary of the capital rendered him the natural intermediary in all business with the court, and he was exploiting this advantage to the full to usurp authority over the whole hierarchy. But the clergy and faithful of Seleucia-Ctesiphon fought this move and demanded his deposition, especially Simeon, who sent a circular letter to Miles of Susa, Aqbalaha of Karka-de-Beth-Slokh and many others. Papa had to back down for fear of the influence of Simeon's parents with the king, but he himself wrote to the western bishops, notably Shaad of Edessa. They determined to make Seleucia-Ctesiphon a patriarchy like Antioch, Rome and Alexandria. Thus, God, who brings good out of evil, the Redemption out of the Fall, the deliverance from Egypt out of the ten plagues, fruit from brambles and roses from thorns, brought the primacy out of the designs of Papa. Some still resisted: 'It would be fatal to put themselves in a position where they stood between two powerful enemies, the Christian kings of Rome and the wicked rulers of Persia.' Simeon was irreconcilable to the end, but Papa neutralized his efforts with his parents by playing on their pride and promising to make their son his successor. This is recorded under Sheria, who died in summer 627 Sel. (316). The chronology agrees completely with Amri's 6 Sapor II (626 Sel., 314/15) for the synod, which is not only during the episcopate of Sheria but also contemporaneous with Shaad's. As ChrEd shows, the latter held office from 624 Sel. (312/13) to 635-36 Sel. (323-25), at all events, did not survive to the Council of Nicaea (May 20, 325), which was attended by his successor, Aitallaha.³¹

Then, we have the acts of Miles.³² After being consecrated bishop of Susa, he labored there three years under great hardship and was finally driven

³⁰ *Die Chronik von Arbela: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des ältesten Christentums im Orient*, tr. with intr. and nn. by E. Sachau (Abhandlungen der k. preuss. Akademie d. Wiss. 1915, philosoph.-hist. Kl. 6; Berlin 1915) 71f.; *Chronica ecclesiae arbelensis*, tr. with intr. and nn. by F. Zorell, *Orientalia Christiana* 8 (1926-27) 177f.

³¹ Ludwig Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die Edessenische Chronik mit dem syrischen Text und einer Uebersetzung* (Texte u. Unters. 9, 1; Leipzig 1892) 93f. (XII-XIV); *Chronicon Edessenum*, tr. by I. Guidi (CSCO 2; Paris-Leipzig 1903) 5.

³² *MM or.* (*supra*, n. 22) 69-71, 72f.

out; three months later the city was destroyed in a revolt. He then spent two years visiting the monks in Egypt, especially Ammon, the disciple of Anthony, and in Jerusalem. On his way home, he stopped off at Nisibis, where James was building his church. Next, he proceeded to Seleucia-Ctesiphon and presided over the synod. The account here naturally betrays bitter hostility to Papa, 'a man of boundless insolence and unparalleled arrogance, who spurned the bishops gathered to try him, and made himself an unbearable burden even to his own priests and deacons.' Miles invokes the paralytic shock upon him as a divine punishment and warns him that he is not to die but to live on in suffering as an example and warning. 'As a matter of fact, he survived 12 yrs. in great misery.' The statement about the destruction of Susa is interesting; that this is fact and not legend finds curious corroboration in Tabari's³³ listing it among the foundations of Sapor II — an assertion about so ancient a place that, were it not for our acts, we would be tempted to reject as ridiculous. As to the chronology, ChrS³⁴ informs us that that king began in his 10th yr. (630 Sel., 318/19) to raise cities, specifically Karkhade-Ledan, which, built hard by the site of Susa, must have been at first designed to supersede it. We may, therefore, infer that Susa must have been levelled before 10 Sapor; the acts say that this occurred before the synod, Amri assigns this to 6 Sapor, so the dates jibe. Again, according to Elias Nisibenus,³⁵ Bishop James spent 7 yrs. on his cathedral, starting it in 624 Sel., i.e., in plenty of time for Miles to help with the work and still get to the capital for the synod in 6 Sapor (626 Sel.). Finally, Ammon,³⁶ pioneer of asceticism in the Nitrean Desert (thought his identification might be disputed), retired thither about 310 A.D. (1or 2 Sapor, 621 or 622 Sel.), i.e., early enough for Miles' visit. The Passion, therefore, furnishes three synchronisms with Amri's 6 Sapor.

³³ 58 Nöld.

³⁴ IV 288.

³⁵ 48.

³⁶ H. G. Evelyn White, *Monasteries of Wadi 'n Natrun II* (New York 1933) 46 n. 10. White also relates that Anthony, by his example, must have largely influenced Ammon's own decision to leave the world, and, by his visits and advice, actually played a prominent role in moulding the nascent community (*ibid.* 48f.). Ammon could, therefore, certainly be called a disciple of Anthony without doing violence to the term. However, taking the word in its strictest sense, M. Lenain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'hist. eccl. des six premiers siècles VII* (Venice 1732), 'Notes sur S. Siméon de Perse' 5, and 'S. Antoine,' art. 16 (last paragraph), identifies Miles' host with a different Ammon, Anthony's disciple and successor, who flourished 356-95. This would, of course, make the acts guilty of the glaring anachronism of which Labourt, *op. cit.* 31, accuses them. But a criticism that insists upon a rigid interpretation of the word 'disciple' and rejects an equally acceptable meaning certainly does not stand on a very firm foundation. Furthermore, the acts were composed no later than c. 400, and it is very difficult to believe that their author would have associated Miles with a contemporary of his own (cf. *infra*, n. 39).

Though all the available material confirms Amri's date for the synod, there is no unanimity on Papa's death.³⁷ Again, Miles' acts bring important evidence in his favor; they assert that 12 yrs. passed between the two events, harmonizing, consequently, with his 6 and 18 Sapor, resp. Furthermore, neither Amri's equating 673 Sel. (Oct. 1, 325/26) with 18 Sapor II (Sept. 6, 326/27) nor Timotheus' 20 Sapor II, quoted by PsEN, offers any great difficulty; the former is an artificial synchronism calculated by subtracting Simeon's 18 yrs. from 655 Sel. and the latter arises from a misunderstanding, upon which ChrArb throws light. This tells us that the metropolitan John went to Seleucia-Ctesiphon in 640 Sel. (328/29), i.e., the same year as 20 Sapor II, to elect a successor to Papa, who had died shortly before. The passage accords, of course, with Amri, since it says that Papa passed away shortly before, not during, 640 Sel. If, however, we had only this statement by itself and no other information by which to control it, we might reasonably infer that Papa actually did die in that year, and so Timotheus may have concluded, either from the source before us or from one allied to it. But it is much more reasonable to suppose that Timotheus reported the statement exactly and that PsEN, whom we have good grounds for regarding as neither a brilliant nor overscrupulous chronologist, distorted it.

BarH³⁸ is alone, therefore, in contradicting Amri and maintaining that the synod against Papa took place in 645 Sel., his death in 646 Sel. (334/35), and 'not 12 yrs., as some mistakenly say,' but 1 yr. passed between. In the first place, let us recall that BarH has already subscribed to the 'primary list.' In the second place, he cannot be right about the interval. His source here deliberately gives the lie to Miles' Passion,³⁹ which is not only accurate

³⁷ *MM or.* 73; Amri 9.15; PsEN 27; ChrArb 75 Sachau, 181 Zorell.

³⁸ 30 (synod occurred 9 yr. after Nicaea in 36 Sel.), 31; cf. *supra*, p. 54.

³⁹ Labourt returns repeatedly to the problem of Miles' acts. On pp. 70f. he presents an excellent résumé, showing how the narrative emphasizes above all the hero's role as the scourge of God, divinely commissioned to punish the sins of men; because of the author's bias, therefore, we must reserve judgment on the 12-yr. interval (p. 26 n. 1) between Papa's synod and death; however, we have no ground for suspicion about the account of the synod, particularly since it is confirmed by the independent Dadisho's minutes (p. 22 n. 4); on the other hand, we must reject Miles' journey to Jerusalem and Egypt, partly because of the gross anachronism (this objection has already been disposed of, *supra*, n. 35), and partly because the Egyptian type of monasticism did not make its appearance in Persia until s. vi (p. 31); obviously, the Passion contains much that is pure fantasy (p. 71 n. 2), elements of legend and folklore, and has fused into one person at least two individuals, Miles the monk and Miles the bishop, the latter, perhaps, alone historical. — The cogency of Labourt's arguments no one will deny. But the mere fact that a hagiographical composition draws on the marvelous and mythical does not prove it a work of the imagination in its entirety; it is possible always that the writer has simply added such details, and that this is the case here can be conclusively demonstrated. His accuracy in chronology has already been shown. His truthfulness in other essentials can also be es-

in its chronology, but was composed, if not by a contemporary, certainly before 450, and by a writer very close to the events he relates. Our annalist could not have had an older or better authority than that. Furthermore, if we consider the circumstances — communication between the two Empires

tablished beyond doubt: we know from Aphraates that Seleucia-Ctesiphon was made a primatial see before Simeon bar Sabbae (cf. Higgins, *op. cit. supra* n. 20, 268f.); that Miles was martyred before the general persecution of Sapor II is made evident by the Martyrology of 412 (ed. F. Nau, PO 10, Paris 1915, 23.10). Furthermore, these acts were written very early. They are already known to Sozomen (2.14) and, in all likelihood, formed part of the collection traditionally ascribed to Maruthas (cf. Baumstark, *op. cit. supra* n. 1, 53 f.), made shortly after 400 and brought west by him. Consequently, the composition of the Passion cannot at the latest be placed long after the beginning of the fifth century, and may, of course, go back much farther. It should, moreover, be observed that the main acts, the destruction of Susa, the synod and the martyrdom, fitted neatly into the author's thesis of Miles as the scourge of God; as a result, he didn't need to alter them, he had only to slant them. Thus, apropos of Susa, he adds that, according to a report, Miles cursed the city on leaving it, and three months later followed the punishment. Likewise, he makes Papa's stroke the sequel of Miles' imprecation. Consequently, I would not agree at all with Labourt's suspicion of the 12 yrs.; any figure or no figure would have suited the writer's purpose as well, and if none had been given, he would have invented none. The proof is a parallel in the acts themselves, the anecdote of a man guilty of perjury and inflicted at Miles' command with leprosy, where not a word is said about how long the victim survived. In fact, of all the accounts of the synod, this strikes me as the closest to the event, so vividly does it convey the bitter resentment felt towards the upstart Papa. It doesn't dally with silly or undignified accusations (cf. Labourt 22), but excoriates the bishop's arrogant and overbearing deportment that had made him heartily detested not only by the hierarchy but even by his own clergy; and, as can be read between the lines of the other sources, this was, in the main, undoubtedly true (cf. *infra*, p. 95). In short, the factual content of the acts is subject to multiple controls, and, in every case, emerges as substantially correct but one-sided, honestly so, however, in that the author does not repeat the calumnies against Papa. Consequently, the document contains the original and authentic Passion of Miles, slanted, it is true, but virtually unchanged. The addition of a few miracles is standard practice in hagiographical compositions. The reliability of the acts has been attacked from a different angle by P. Peeters, 'La légende de Saint Jacques de Nisibe,' *Anal. Boll.* 38 (1920) 290f., 340f. Peeters argues that Elnis' notices about James reflect too strongly the myth of Augin to be trusted; that the legend of James of Nisibis started very early, and under its influence the reference to him in Miles was added by some redactor after Sozomen's time, though Augin's Life depends on Miles', not vice versa; that, however, the building of the church may have some foundation in fact. It should, first of all, be noted that these objections affect only one detail of the acts, the Nisibis episode, which Sozomen happens not to vouch for explicitly. However, Peeters agrees that the Greek historian used the same version as has come down to us. It must, consequently, have been composed about 400, as already stated, and the question boils down to whether we have the original text or not; if the former, then there can be no doubt but that James did build a church and that Elnis is correct, even if he did add items from Augin's legend. The doubt cannot be finally settled until we get a critical edition of the Syriac acts, but since the Passion served as the source of the later sagas, I see no reason for supposing that it has been interpolated.

was restricted, yet the appeal had to be carried to Antioch; decisions rendered not only on the principal issue, the guilt of Papa, but on the culpability of each participant; witnesses heard on all sides and questions (or depositions taken at some convenient point either in Byzantium or Iran: it would be extremely interesting to know just how such an affair was conducted despite the obstacles) — it would seem impossible for the entire process to have been disposed of within a single year.⁴⁰ This impression is definitely strengthened by the language of Dadisho's council, that, of the bishops opposed to Papa in good faith, part had suffered martyrdom and part had died a natural death — which implies the lapse of some time.

Consequently, if, with BarH, we assign Papa's demise to 646 Sel. (26 Sapor), we must, with Miles' Passion, make the synod 12 yrs. earlier, i.e., in 634 Sel. (14 Sapor), and that is refuted by ChrArb.⁴¹ It sides with Amri in putting the death of Papa before 20 Sapor — in itself a valuable confirmation, since ChrArb antedates BarH by seven centuries. But, in addition, ChrArb records

⁴⁰ Cf. Labourt 23f.

⁴¹ Cf. *supra*, pp. 48, 55. ChrArb was composed between 540 and 569; cf. Baumstark 135. Its version of the Papa affair has a number of peculiarities: (1) Simeon, backed by clergy and laity, leads the opposition; (2) nothing is said about the synod or Papa's affliction, and Papa himself appoints Simeon as his successor; (3) nothing is said about what part the metropolitans of Arbela took in the prolonged controversy, but emphasis is laid on the fact that the neighboring and rival see of Karkha-de-Bet-Slokh actively participated in the cabal against Papa. In connection with the second peculiarity, we might first point out another proof that Arbela opposed the bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Later on, ChrArb asserts that in 640 Sel., shortly after the death of Papa, John journeyed to Seleucia to help elect a successor; if John had any such design, he manifestly did not acknowledge Simeon. Now, in ChrArb, if compared with the acts of Miles and Dadisho, we can clearly discern that a strong party in the hierarchy objected to Papa's ambitions, that Miles acted as its leader and rallying point and that Simeon took the initiative in proposing a synod to depose him. ChrArb differs from the rest of the sources in asserting that the threat of deposition was so serious as to alarm and restrain Papa and induce him to seek legitimation of his position by an appeal to Antioch. As we shall see later (cf. *infra*, p. 95), this is substantially correct, but that neither the synod nor Papa's stroke ever occurred is incredible. Why otherwise would Dadisho's council and the whole subsequent tradition have accepted without a word of protest so discreditable an incident? After all, ChrArb's narrative is capable of a very flattering interpretation, if we ascribe Papa's conduct to zeal instead of ambition, whereas, no matter what construction is put upon the other version of events, the whole affair is a disgrace. In my opinion, the total silence about the synod is part and parcel of the total silence about Sheria's stand on the issue. No doubt, as pointed out above, he, too, joined forces with the enemies of Papa, and participated in his condemnation and deposition, just as John, his successor, fought against Simeon. The Nestorian compiler of ChrArb would naturally regard this as a blot on the history of his see and conceal it, particularly if Sheria was numbered among those censured by the Western Fathers, as is implied by the continued hostility to the primacy of Seleucia-Ctesiphon under John. Aqballaha is not, of course, the Aqballaha that attended the Council of 410 (*Syn.* or. 274), but another and earlier metropolitan of the same name.

the conspiracy against Papa before Sheria's end in 627 Sel., and this decides the issue against 634 Sel. and for Amri's 6 Sapor (626 Sel.). ChrArb gives a version of the synod, independent of all others, that must have come directly from the ancient annals of the see of Arbela. In the first place, it alone mentions Shaad. Again, it alone supplies the information necessary to an understanding of Simeon's role, namely, (1) that he was the center of the local opposition to Papa (compare the acts' assertion that his own priests and deacons looked upon him as an unbearable burden), and (2) that it was his influence at court that secured him special treatment when every other ringleader of the schism was condignly punished. Further, it alone states the basic conflict of policy that divided the two parties, that one side was pro-Roman and the other not. In connection with this detail, it should be noted that the tone of the narrative, though not so embittered as the *Passion*, is, nevertheless, distinctly not flattering to Papa. Both traits must reflect faithfully the contemporary reaction of the bishop and clergy of Arbela, since no Nestorian of the sixth century like our author could have invented them; he would never have admitted doubt as to the advisability of the autonomy of his own patriarchate nor could he have felt any sentiment but the warmest partiality for its founder. But, if ChrArb, already entitled by its far greater age to much higher authority than BarH, in a passage bearing the stamp of genuine antiquity and independence, confirms Amri, then we must date the synod against Papa in 6 Sapor. On the other hand, BarH's affirmations can be readily explained; he sets the metropolitan's death in 646 Sel. merely because he has dated his consecration in 577 Sel. and has assigned him a tenure of 69 yrs.⁴² Both figures are purely legendary. As to his spacing the synod only 1 yr. before Papa's death, I'd suggest that two synods must have been held; the rehabilitation of the catholicus and promulgation of his primacy would almost inevitably have been solemnized at a second assembly, and, if something of the sort took place a year before Papa's death, BarH may have confused one with the other.

The three dates in Simeon's career preserved by Amri are, therefore, unquestionably correct, namely, 6 Sapor II (314/15) for his consecration, 18 Sapor II (326/27) for his accession, and 36 Sapor II (344/45) for his martyrdom, the first two also marking important events in Papa's life, his deposition

⁴² 28-32. BarH's chronology seems to agree with the spurious letter of Papa to the Church of Nisibis; cf. O. Braun, 'Der Briefwechsel des Katholikos Papa,' *Zeitschr. f. kath. Theol.* 18 (1894) 560f. This yields, according to Braun, 334 for Papa's synod, makes the persecution begin in 341 (31 Sapor) and end after 28 yrs. in 369. Since the false correspondence gives the wrong date for Simeon's martyrdom, it could not have been composed in 363-68, as Braun argues. Probably, the 28 yrs. for the duration of the persecution include the mysterious 8-yr. aggregate for Shahdost-Barbashmin discussed above (*supra*, pp. 51-3). The interrelationship of the chronicles with the apocryphal epistle cannot be determined on the basis of the material studied here; cf. *supra*, n. 26, and *infra*, n. 82,

by the synod, and his death. Since unmistakable relics of the same notices appear also in ChrS, Mari and BarH, we may conclude that the chronicle tradition once contained an early and exact series of the *catholici*, which is designated here the 'primary list.' The first of the above items signalizes, moreover, a milestone in the history of the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon and it is surprising if the source did not also record the year of the proclamation of the primacy; this may, perhaps, have taken place at a council held in 325/26. The chronology of the 'primary list' for Shahdost and Barbashmin, ousted by the corruptions of the 'secondary list,' has been lost beyond recovery. Consequently, to determine its content with respect to them and the vacancy, we shall have to work back from the second section of the catalogue, to which we now turn.

III.

For the second section of the catalogue, Tomarsa, Qayuma, and Isaac, the 'primary list' can, on the contrary, be recovered almost fully. In this case, however, the chronology must be discussed in closer connection with the narrative.⁴³ Bahram IV did not at first show his true colors, according to ChrS, but once consolidated in power, unleashed the persecution, and put to death his high official, Bokhtisho, for the faith. At Bahram's accession, Tomarsa was chosen *catholicus*; he suffered patiently at the hands of the magi, but reconstituted the Church, consecrating bishops and rebuilding the churches with the aid and protection of Bokhtisho until the latter's martyrdom. All the rest of the sources have substantially the same, but on Qayuma and Isaac they vary greatly. They have to be summarized here in considerable detail as a background partly for the chronology and partly for the later discussion of their interdependence.

PsEN's very brief notice says only that Qayuma resigned at the end of the persecution, and asked, because of his age, for the election of a successor. We learn from ChrS that despite his years he carried on until the religious peace at the accession of Yezdegerd. Then he chose Isaac in his place, and, with the consent of bishops and faithful, retired in his favor. After the latter's inauguration, the emperor Arcadius in a letter urged Yezdegerd to put an end to the war against the Church, and despatched his plea by Bishop Maruthas, a skilled physician, in the hope of thus curing the then ill Sassanid. Yezdegerd received the envoy with joy, granted tolerance to the Christians, and sent a message of reassurance to Isaac. (This involves a trifling inconsistency, because ChrS implied above that Isaac didn't succeed until the persecution was over.) The *catholicus*, imitating the Roman custom, planned

⁴³ PsEN 28; ChrS V 305f., 313, 317-19; Mari 24, 25-27; BarH 42-52; Amri (and Sliba) 12-15.

to hold a council to reorganize cult and discipline, and, in 11 Yezdegerd (Jan.-Feb. 410), took advantage of Maruthas' presence to do so; the Byzantine prelate had, through a letter which he carried from the western hierarchy, won the king's acquiescence. Isaac and Maruthas drew up a set of canons, to which all present adhered. Thus, schism was done away with and tranquillity restored.

Under the pen of Mari, this narrative receives an extensive and surprising development. After fear of death had kept the see vacant for two years Qayuma volunteered, declaring that he would risk his life rather than have the Church deprived of a patriarch. Mari then substitutes for ChrS' account of the embassy a version closely allied to Socrates. Upon the conclusion of the treaty, Maruthas is sent at Yezdegerd's request for a physician, obtains the legal recognition of Christianity and starts rebuilding the churches and exposes a hoax of the pagan priesthood. Qayuma then abdicates in favor of Isaac, but summons a synod together with Maruthas to settle the succession; only with extreme reluctance do the Fathers accept the retirement of so saintly a man and finally strike a compromise, decreeing that both shall hold office with Isaac submitting dutifully to Qayuma's decisions in all things — a precept that Isaac fulfils admirably. Incidentally, the presence of so many bishops gives Maruthas an opportunity to instruct them in the canonical institutions of the West, which, at his persuasion, are adopted by them. East thus recognizes West as a brother. Maruthas then went home to take part in the I General Council of Constantinople and there had occasion to make a glowing report on the virtue, heroism, and unstained orthodoxy of the Persian Church. To renew the benediction of association with it, he soon received the emperor's permission for a second journey, this time with Acacius. Mari has not only eliminated the inconsistency in ChrS, he has also given the facts a revolutionary twist. The latter, it is true, telescopes events, treating Isaac's elevation and the synod of 410 as a unit and ignoring the stretch of time; but, in Mari, the assembly is called together by Qayuma, not Isaac, and its main business becomes the question of retirement;^{43a} the older man is not permitted to resign, but a joint catholicate ensues.

These distortions now become part of the tradition and breed further distortion. BarH follows Mari, but, well aware that Qayuma could have had nothing to do with the union of 410, he settles for two synods, and adjusts the narrative accordingly. Maruthas negotiates the treaty and, simultaneously, persuades the king to repeal the laws against his coreligionists. Qayuma, in the presence of Maruthas, holds his (Mari's fictitious) synod, etc., just as in Mari. But then (differently from Mari) Maruthas attends the Council

^{43a} That Mari has done this is evident, because (1) he doesn't mention the synod of 410 at all, and, if we consider its importance, this would be an extraordinary omission, and (2) the legislation imposed by that synod is here attributed to Qayuma's council.

of Constantinople, omitting all mention of the glories of the Persian Church, and, at the emperor's command, carries back to Iran its decrees. Isaac and the bishops meet in 410 to express their adherence thereto, and Maruthas prescribes the canons to them. BarH has, furthermore, the unique affirmation with regard to Tomarsa, that he took office immediately after the treaty with Jovian in 363, Sapor II abandoning his hostility towards Christianity abruptly at the sight of Julian's terrible end, and allowing the churches to be rebuilt. Upon the death of Sapor II, Bahram IV, his son, an enemy of the faithful, ascended the throne, and for two years no one dared accept the see until Qayuma volunteered.

Amri takes over the two synods from BarH, but otherwise consists virtually of a combination of ChrS and Mari (I indicate the particular source in parentheses). Qayuma holds office and calls his council (Mari). He resigns in favor of Isaac, who succeeds (ChrS). This takes place upon the treaty with Arcadius (BarH). Maruthas then arrives at Yezdegerd's request (Mari). He brings a letter from Arcadius, achieves religious freedom and attends the synod of 410 (ChrS). Isaac takes the initiative and, with the unanimous consent of the Fathers, prescribes the canons, which Maruthas reads and prodigiously admires. Maruthas acquaints them with the discipline of the West, and, in turn, copies out carefully the laws peculiar to the East. He then makes Mari's report to the Council of Constantinople, and, on his second journey, accompanies Acacius.

To take up next the chronology of Tomarsa, Qayuma and Isaac, the annals all date the election of the last-named in 1 Yezdegerd I (Aug. 19, 399/400), except Sliba, who puts it in 3 Yezdegerd I (Aug. 401/2). The figures for the other two patriarchs are:⁴⁴

PsEN: Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 1-8 Bahram IV; Qayuma, in office 4 yrs., in retirement 3 yrs.; gross, 15 yrs. including retirement.

ChrS: Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 1-9 Bahram; Qayuma, in office from 9 Bahram to 1 Yezdegerd, in retirement 1-3 Yezdegerd; gross, indefinite.

Mari: Tomarsa, 7 yrs.; vacancy, 2 yrs.; Qayuma, in office 5 yrs.; gross, 14 yrs. excluding retirement.

⁴⁴ PsEN 28; ChrS V 305, 313 (Qayuma held office until accession of Yezdegerd, i.e., 1 Yezdegerd); Mari 24.17, 18, 29; 25.33, 36f.; PsED (*supra*, n. 1); BarH 44, 46; Amri and Sliba 12.29; 13.2-4 (original reads 721, as in Gismondi, but *octo* for *tribus*; Skehan) (but 721 is a scribal error for 711, i.e., 703 plus 8), 14, 16, 35-37. Since Sliba 15.8 puts Isaac's death in 12 Yezdegerd, 728 Sel., and thus allows only 9 yrs. for his tenure, 719-28, whereas Amri 15.9 gives him 11 yrs., i.e., 1-12 Yezdegerd, it is clear that Sliba assigns Isaac's accession to 3 Yezdegerd. As I have already mentioned (*supra*, p. 47), despite the fact that the Sel. yrs. are ascribed to Amri by the manuscript, they must belong to Sliba, as is clear from a comparison of the summaries given here. In the following list, 'gross' means the total number of years for Tomarsa's and Qayuma's terms and the latter's retirement.

PsED: Tomarsa and Qayuma omitted altogether and inserted in the legendary period before Papa.

BarH: Tomarsa, 8 yrs.; vacancy, 2 yrs.; Qayuma, in office 5 yrs.; gross, 15 yrs. excluding retirement.

Amri: Tomarsa, 8 yrs. and some mos., 1-9 Bahram; vacancy, 1½ yrs.; Qayuma, 4 yrs. in office, 10 Bahram to 3 Yezdegerd; gross, 13 yrs. including retirement.

Sliba: Tomarsa, 8 yrs. and some mos., 1-9 Bahram, 703-11 Sel.; vacancy, 4 yrs., 711-15 Sel.; Qayuma, in office 4 yrs., 10 Bahram to 3 Yezdegerd, 715-719 Sel.; gross, 16 yrs. including retirement, but apparently excluding it.

All this confusion is stirred up by a single underlying discrepancy: the limits, 1 Bahram IV to 3 Yezdegerd I, attested by ChrS, Amri and Sliba allow only 13 yrs. (Bahram's 11 and 2 of Yezdegerd), but the gross for Tomarsa-Qayuma that must fit within them amounts, according to PsEN and BarH, to 15 yrs. ChrS and PsEN evade the difficulty by a discreet silence, the one saying nothing about the length of Qayuma's term, the other, nothing about its terminus. Others, however, face up to the problem and meet it by varying the distribution of the total. In all but Mari, Tomarsa reigns 8 yrs.; Qayuma stretches over 7 yrs., divided up 2-5, vacancy and tenure, in Mari and BarH, and 4-3, tenure and retirement, in PsEN. Amri⁴⁵ again works directly on ChrS, since he assigns Bahram IV only 10 yrs. His arrangement adds some mos. to Tomarsa, reduces the 2-yr. interregnum to 1½ yrs., and does not add retirement to tenure — details that indicate an ingenious series of 'conjectures'; on the basis, presumably, of the joint catholicate, he first interprets the 4-yr. tenure and 3-yr. retirement as concurrent, not successive, periods; then, lacking now 1 yr., he takes over the 2-yr. interregnum from Mari, 'conjectures' that it contains also the unfinished portion of Tomarsa's last year, reassigns some mos. of it to the latter and 1½ yrs. to the former, discards on the oriental reckoning both the some mos. and the ½ yr., and finally proposes: Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 1-9 Bahram; vacancy, 1 yr., 9-10 Bahram; Qayuma, 4 yrs., 10 Bahram (10-1-2-3) to 3 Yezdegerd, including 3 yrs. with

⁴⁵ He states distinctly that Qayuma held office for 4 yrs., 10 Bahram IV to 3 Yezdegerd, that he resigned at the accession of Yezdegerd, and that Isaac functioned 11 yrs. to 12 Yezdegerd (15.8f.), i.e., 1-12 Yezdegerd. Therefore, Amri undoubtedly regards both as patriarchs during 1-3 Yezdegerd. However, he does not say explicitly either that 3 yrs. of Qayuma's tenure were spent in retirement, nor that Isaac remained subordinate to his senior. But, I believe this to be an oversight occasioned by the complicated dovetailing, in which Amri indulges, of three disparate narratives, ChrS, Mari and BarH. Furthermore, as the chronicler has obviously taken over all the elements of the 4-3 distribution, he must, like it, intend to round out Qayuma's last partial year, 3 Yezdegerd, into a full one, and, as a result, he assigns only 10 yrs. to Bahram IV. If he counted 11 yrs. for Bahram IV and excluded 3 Yezdegerd (10-11-1-2), then the retirement would amount to only 2 yrs. (1-2), and we have no justification for assuming that he adopted a 4-2 distribution.

Isaac, 1-3 Yezdegerd. This is clever, but it is wasted; as the foregoing paragraphs show, the joint patriarchate did not exist at all but was invented by Mari, before whom Qayuma was supposed to have made an outright abdication, witness ChrS and PsEN. PsEN obviously had originally the same reading as ChrS, and the 'conflation' calls attention to an error, namely, that in thrusting 8 yrs. of Tomarsa and 4 yrs. of Qayuma between 1 Bahram and 1 Yezdegerd, 12 yrs. have been assigned the former instead of the correct 11 yrs.,⁴⁶ thus: Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 1-9 Bahram; Qayuma, 4 yrs. in office, 9 Bahram (9-10-11-12) to 1 Yezdegerd, and 3 yrs. in retirement, 1-3 Yezdegerd.

It is in this last, the starting point of all the others, that we encounter the 'secondary list.' Its distinctive features are the 4-3 distribution of Qayuma's total, the 12-yr. reign of Bahram IV, and the interchange of cardinal and ordinal; he forces the 3-yr. retirement of Qayuma into the 2-yr. interval, 1-3 Yezdegerd, by equating 3 with 3rd, i.e., counting Qayuma's last yr. as only partial. The 4-yr. vacancy in Sliba after Tomarsa contains, I think, both Amri's 1½ yr. interregnum and Qayuma's 3-yr. retirement; in other words, it seems to me that here Sliba implicitly rejects the hypothesis of a concurrent term and retirement. Mari, misunderstanding PsEN's corrector, reduces Tomarsa from 8 to 7 yrs. Mari, however, in conjunction with BarH, has preserved an all-important bit from an ancient historian, the 2-5 apportionment of Qayuma's aggregate. Since Tomarsa is assigned 8 yrs. unanimously, the resultant combination, 8-2-5, must represent a reversal of 8-5-2, i.e., a total of 15 yrs. with 13 yrs. fitting within the limits, 1 Bahram to 3 Yezdegerd, and a remainder of 2 yrs., which was transformed into a vacancy before Qayuma.

This 8-5-2 distribution has two features of significance, viz., (1) it does not concern itself in the least with 1 Yezdegerd but only with 3 Yezdegerd, and (2) it manifestly knows nothing of the resignation; if its author had known, he would simply have accredited 5 yrs. to the term and 2 yrs. to the retirement. Why would a later scribe ignore so perfectly satisfactory an explanation to move the extra period from where it properly belonged and distort it into a vacancy before Qayuma? Consequently, we have here the earliest state of the text, the underlying discrepancy in its simplest terms bared of subsequent embroidery — two metropolitans with an aggregate of 15 yrs.

⁴⁶ As mentioned previously (n. 15), the corrector's changes have no implication beyond the immediate one. Here, for instance, he has patently altered 1-9 Bahram IV to the senseless 1-8 Bahram IV, but he insinuates neither that Tomarsa reigned only 7 yrs. nor became catholicus in 1 Bahram IV. How could he mean the latter when he had already equated 1 Tomarsa with 1 Sapor III? (Cf. *infra*, p. 67). Furthermore, since the interval between 1 Sapor III and 1 Yezdegerd, 16 yrs. (5 of Sapor III and 11 of Bahram IV), is already too long to be filled out by the Tomarsa-Qayuma gross of 15 yrs., he obviously cannot want to shorten Tomarsa's term.

in office, yet the limits, 1 Bahram to 3 Yezdegerd, admitting only 13 yrs. One implication is obvious: the insistence upon 3 Yezdegerd as the *terminus ad quem* can only mean that ancient authorities put the accession of Isaac in that year. A further inference is that Tomarsa and Qayuma have been interpolated into the series of metropolitans at this point and belong elsewhere. As a matter of fact, they have also been intruded into a totally different position: in PsED we discover them in the legendary section preceding Papa. In other words, the two names are a marginal gloss that crept into the text at different places.

Once in possession of these two clarifications, that Isaac was consecrated in 3 Yezdegerd, not 1 Yezdegerd, and that Tomarsa and Qayuma have been interpolated at this point in the series, we can retrace the whole development of the divergences with assurance. At its basis must have lain the misconception, to which attention has already been called,⁴⁷ that Sapor II had as immediate successor Bahram IV. The mistake was evidently made by a comparatively early and influential writer. At all events, since it was taken for granted that the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon had remained vacant from Barbashmin to the death of Sapor II, the error rendered it impossible to date the restoration of the catholicate any earlier than 1 Bahram IV. It was this that gave rise to all the difficulty. As a result, once Tomarsa and Qayuma had been dislocated, the 8-5-2 annalist, who clearly believed that their terms had occurred between Sapor II and Isaac, had no choice but to equate 1 Tomarsa with 1 Bahram, and, since the sources allotted them a total of 15 yrs. and put the accession of Isaac in 3 Yezdegerd, he could do nothing but leave 2 yrs. of Qayuma dangling over into Isaac's tenure.⁴⁸

This was intolerable, and an answer to the problem was sought in three different directions. One writer, copied by PsED, cut the Gordian knot and simply removed both metropolitans, inserting them arbitrarily elsewhere. So radical a measure, however, apparently found little favor, and various efforts were made at a solution that would maintain the original order. Meantime, by an independent development to be described later,⁴⁹ Isaac's consecration was advanced from 3 to 1 Yezdegerd. The compiler of the 'secondary list' hit upon a clever conjecture, Qayuma's resignation, that would reconcile all the data; by its means he rescues the traditional 3 Yezdegerd and 7-yr. tenure, and, at the same time, explains 1 Yezdegerd. The dovetailing of the new with the old accession of Isaac, however, forced him into the 4-3 distribution, the interchange of cardinal and ordinal necessarily involved

⁴⁷ *Supra*, p. 49.

⁴⁸ The crudity of what is assumed here is no objection to it; it is no worse than the chronology presupposed by Mari or BarH at times.

⁴⁹ *Infra*, p. 71.

therein, and perhaps, the allotment of 12 yrs. to Bahram IV, but, on the whole, it was a very ingenious fitting together of very difficult texts.

However, a third group, the better informed Syriac historians, followed a totally different line; they, like the foregoing, accepted as axiomatic that the persecution had endured throughout the rule of Sapor II, but they also knew very well that Bahram IV had not been his immediate successor, so they associated Tomarsa with Sapor III. The corrector of PsEN and Elias Nisibenus both equate 1 Tomarsa with 1 Sapor III.⁵⁰ What corresponding readjustments they made in the list of catholici is impossible to say; for, Elias omits Qayuma altogether and PsEN is ambiguous. But one thing we must conclude — that they consciously and deliberately repudiated the whole story of the resignation, since their date leaves 16 yrs. for the 15-yr. aggregate of both metropolitans, thus eliminating completely any overlapping into Isaac's episcopate. The 8-2-5 distribution had of necessity to set 1 Tomarsa under Sapor III, because only thus could room be found for the 15-yr. interval before Isaac's election.⁵¹ Its originator, counting from 3 Yezdegerd for Isaac's accession, naturally placed 1 Tomarsa in or near 4 Sapor III, but, if this arrangement was readjusted to 1 Yezdegerd, then 1 Tomarsa corresponded to 2 or 1 Sapor III, according as the scribe allotted Bahram IV his correct 11 yrs. or the shorter reign of 10 yrs. attested by ChrS.

BarH occupies a unique position. For him, Tomarsa ruled 8 yrs., from the treaty with Jovian to the demise of Sapor II, and died during 1 Bahram IV, Sapor II's immediate successor; after a 2-yr. vacancy, Qayuma functioned for 5 yrs. to 1 Yezdegerd I; i.e., the chronicler synchronizes Tomarsa's 8 yrs. with the 16-yr. stretch between 363/64 and 379/80, and the remaining 7 yrs. with the whole of Bahram IV's 11 yrs. He thus takes over the 8-2-5 distribution and keeps it intact as a unit, but, confusing its Sapor III with Sapor II, falls right back into the error it was particularly designed to eliminate, that Bahram IV inherited the throne directly from Sapor II, and, as a further result, contaminates two incompatible sources, distorting both in the process. In the one, he shifts Qayuma with his attendant vacancy from the end to the beginning of Bahram's reign, and, in the other, in which, no doubt, both Tomarsa and Qayuma had virtually filled out the 16-yr. interval, he does the reverse to the former.

The 'secondary list,' therefore, comprised the following: Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 1-9 Bahram IV; Qayuma, 4 yrs. in office, 9 Bahram to 1 Yezdegerd I, and

⁵⁰ *Supra*, p. 49.

⁵¹ This is confirmed by the fact that BarH, who preserved the 8-2-5 distribution, associates Tomarsa with Sapor II. This is easy to understand if the 8-2-5 distribution put Tomarsa under Sapor III; BarH, finding Tomarsa and Qayuma under Sapor II in his source, might readily have assumed that Sapor II was meant by the 8-2-5 distributor, as stated further on in the next paragraph.

3 yrs. in retirement, 1-3 Yezdegerd. The narrative in all the annalists is derived from it, and, in PsEN, ChrS, Amri and Sliba, the chronology as well. PsEN's corrector, Elias Nisibenus, Mari and BarH, however, preserve fragments of an earlier scheme, which cannot be satisfactorily restored in detail, but whose main design can be unmistakably discerned, to push back the accession of Tomarsa into the reign of Sapor III. Neither arrangement has the slightest historical value. The original catalogue, which supplied the point of departure for both, employed for a framework the fundamental error that Bahram IV had directly followed Sapor II. This was accepted by the 'secondary list,' but rejected by its rival — rejected, however, not on recourse to sources of greater reliability or age, but, as we shall presently see, solely on the basis of conjecture prompted by a better knowledge of the Sassanid succession.⁵² The only superiority of the latter consists in its repudiating the story of Qayuma's resignation, and thus bearing witness that that fiction formed no part of the ancient tradition.

But, though the 'secondary list' is in itself worthless, yet, it enables us to reconstruct with entire assurance the essentials of the 'primary list.' As the whole foregoing argument shows, Tomarsa and Qayuma have been interpolated at this point in the series, and Isaac's elevation has been advanced from 3 to 1 Yezdegerd. Therefore, the 'primary list' provided for a vacancy immediately before Isaac, and put the restoration of the catholicate in 3 Yezdegerd I (Aug. 18, 401/2). But where did the 'primary list' have the interpolated metropolitans? Textually, only one answer is possible: in the interval between the treaty with Jovian and the death of Sapor II, i.e., 55-71 Sapor II (363/64-379/80). This is at once both the more difficult reading and also the only reading that will explain all the variants. We discover but two clues to the original order, PsED's insertion of the names before Papa, and the fragment in BarH that, to all appearances, had both metropolitans in the above period.

The latter is incomparably the more difficult reading. The whole later tradition represents Sapor III as implacable to his dying day in his hatred of Christianity; as has already been said, it was axiomatic that the persecution endured in all its fierceness to the very end of his sway, and, as also has been pointed out, it was this very assumption that occasioned all the difficulty for the 'secondary list,' once its author had fallen prey to the illusion that Bahram IV succeeded directly to Sapor II.⁵³ We cannot, then, imagine that any medieval chronicler would ever have moved metropolitans of Seleucia-Ctesiphon from elsewhere into Sapor II's time; all were torturing their in-

⁵² There was no catholicus at all between the death of Sapor II and the accession of Isaac; cf. *infra*, pp. 83f.

⁵³ *Supra*, pp. 48f.

genuity to keep them out. Yet, BarH, as previously mentioned, through confusing Sapor III with Sapor II, left Tomarsa under the latter. No doubt, he was partly misled by the 'secondary list,' but the paramount influence must have been some source that actually did put Tomarsa (and, of course, also Qayuma) in the later years of Sapor II — a source, too, of the highest antiquity, since its conception of that monarch's character and personality differed so greatly not only from the view obtaining in BarH's own day, but even from the portrait now found in the Syriac acts.⁵⁴ But BarH's reading, besides being the more difficult, also offers a satisfactory explanation for the variants; we can now readily understand how Tomarsa and Qayuma came to be dislocated in the first place — everybody would take for granted that they couldn't possibly have been contemporaries of Sapor II —, why such strenuous labor was expended in keeping them between Barbashmin and Isaac — their original relative order —, and why PsED's solution proved so unattractive.

Therefore, in the 'primary list' the catholici of the latter part of the fourth century were arranged as follows: Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 56-64 Sapor II (364/65-372/73); Qayuma, 7 yrs., 64-71 Sapor II, i.e., 64 Sapor to 1 Ardashir II (372/73-379/80); vacancy, 22 yrs., 1 Ardashir II to 3 Yezdegerd I (379/80-401/2); Isaac, from 3 Yezdegerd I (401/2). Since the edict of toleration lasted until the death of Sapor II, Qayuma's term ran to 379/80, and Tomarsa's inauguration must have been put in 364/65 (56 Sapor II), not 363/64 (55 Sapor II), the year of the treaty with Jovian.

The 'primary list' constituted the ancient foundations of the whole chronicle tradition, as is proven by the distinct impress it has left on our writers. Its most notable trace is Mari's preservation of the length of the vacancy, 22 yrs., from Barbashmin to Yezdegerd I — as he puts it.⁵⁵ About Barbashmin he is, of course, wrong, and, in speaking of 22 yrs. to Yezdegerd, he really means, 22 yrs. to Isaac, since he mistakenly regards the metropolitan's accession as simultaneous with the king's. Again, ChrS and Mari⁵⁶ relate that after the treaty with Jovian Sapor II ceased from persecution, permitting the churches to be rebuilt, but, upon the emperor's death, recommenced, because 'the priests of the idols had promised that if he exterminated the faithful he would live forever, and the fool believed them.' It sounds rather ridiculous to speak of rebuilding churches if the respite had lasted only six months and an invading army occupied Persia almost the whole of that time. Mari, in fact, too, felt the incongruity of such a statement and omitted it. But it certainly implies that a genuine edict of toleration was issued, and remained in force long enough for Christianity to regain its confidence and at least

⁵⁴ *Infra*, n. 82.

⁵⁵ 24.17.

⁵⁶ ChrS IV 288f.; Mari 14.10-13.

begin reestablishing itself openly. We may, then, fairly infer that ChrS-Mari used the same authority as BarH, particularly since he employs exactly the same phrase,⁵⁷ and merely distorted it with greater consistency, concocting the extravagant fable about Sapor's living forever as an excuse for mutilating the text. Though only Mari mentions explicitly either the existence or duration of an interregnum, all the evidence for the interpolation of Tomarsa and Qayuma, is, of course, indirect evidence for the vacancy. But we have also some direct evidence. The interpolator was confronted not only with the knotty chronological problem already discussed, but with the further very serious obstacle, tantamount to a self-contradiction, that he was going to have the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon occupied and efficiently administered throughout the reign of Bahram IV, a violent persecutor of the Church. Various efforts were made to eliminate the inconsistency, but they need not be detailed here. The annalists, however, are unanimous in agreeing that Bahram IV, at least after consolidating his power, waged a relentless war against Christianity. To that extent they still mirror faithfully the primitive common source and the original vacancy that was alone compatible with such a situation. We perceive, accordingly, that BarH is not isolated; the 'primary list' permeated the whole chronicle tradition, and dominated and shaped and influenced it right down to its latest representative, Amri.

In addition to Sliba's still retaining 3 Yezdegerd, other vestiges of that date amount virtually to proof, and explain very satisfactorily, too, the intrusion of 1 Yezdegerd. PsEN sets Qayuma's resignation and Isaac's election at the persecution's end. ChrS, however, has Isaac's election before the persecution's end, which, of course, contradicts its own account of Qayuma. Mari eliminates the illogicality, relating that, after the treaty, Maruthas was sent at Yezdegerd's request and achieved the persecution's end, and only then did Isaac's election take place. BarH agrees substantially, but differs in one detail: Maruthas did not arrive after the treaty, but negotiated it. Amri puts together the treaty and Isaac's election, but separates both sharply from Maruthas' arrival later and the persecution's end. First, while all say practically the same of Qayuma, PsEN, Mari and BarH, in placing Isaac's election at the persecution's end, remain consistent, but ChrS and Amri, by arranging Isaac's election before the persecution's end, become inconsistent. Secondly, for BarH, the persecution's end is the treaty, but not for Mari, because, whereas BarH associates Maruthas' arrival with the treaty, Mari does not; they agree, in short, that Maruthas' arrival is the persecution's end, but not that Maruthas' arrival is the treaty.

To come to the question of sources, Amri does not obtain his version by any 'conjectural' reconciliation of Mari and BarH, since his inconsistency

⁵⁷ i.e., 'permitted the churches to be rebuilt;' BarH 44; ChrS and Mari, *ibid*.

is shared by ChrS, which preexisted all three. Now, Amri follows Chr Sword for word in describing Qayuma's resignation, Isaac's election and the persecution's end, simply dovetailing Mari's modifications into ChrS, yet creates a marked division between the treaty and Isaac's election, on the one hand, and the persecution's end, on the other. But, since both ChrS and Amri have here exactly the same narrative, with exactly the same inherent inconsistency, but Amri supplies the context of that inconsistency whereas ChrS does not, both necessarily go back to exactly the same source, and it is this source, not ChrS, that Amri is directly quoting. The detail, that Maruthas had been despatched only after a request of Yezdegerd, is missing in ChrS; it must be a 'conjecture' of Mari's, and did not stand in the common authority. In any case, an early historian had distinguished emphatically the treaty and the persecution's end, had, with unmistakable clearness, averred that the persecution's end was not the treaty, but the aftermath of the treaty.

This, of course, does not of itself prove that 2 yrs. elapsed between the events, but, when the textual evidence demonstrates (1) that Isaac's election, preceded, as it was, by a long vacancy, was the persecution's end, and (2) that Isaac's election, i.e., the persecution's end, was advanced from 3 to 1 Yezdegerd — when, I say, the textual evidence demonstrates this —, we have every reason to infer that the treaty occurred in 1 Yezdegerd, and the persecution's end, i.e., Isaac's election, occurred in 3 Yezdegerd. Now, the corruption of the date for the persecution's end had nothing to do with the chronological difficulties in the patriarchal catalogue, which were solved by the 'conjecture' of Qayuma's resignation. The beauty of this is its flexibility; it will adapt itself to any distribution of the digit 7. So, if 3 Yezdegerd and the 8-5-2 arrangement had been in possession at the time, the 'secondary list' would have 'conjectured' simply that Qayuma had functioned 5 yrs. and retired 2 yrs. (if the list synchronized with an 11-yr. reign for Bahram IV, or, if with a 12-yr. reign — it doesn't matter to the resignation hypothesis —, then 6 and 1, respectively, i.e., 8-6-1); but if it didn't so 'conjecture,' it was because meanwhile 1 Yezdegerd had become received for Isaac's election on other grounds.

Now, our writers quarrel because all accept the proposition, Maruthas' arrival is the persecution's end, but diverge on the proposition, Maruthas' arrival is the treaty. Here we encounter again and recognize readily the source allied with Socrates; it is Socrates who speaks of Maruthas' arrival as the persecution's end, but has not one word to say of either the treaty or Isaac's election.⁵⁸ His report is chronologically neutral; if incorporated into the ecclesiastical annals, it would have been entered with Isaac's election, i.e., persecution's end, under 3 Yezdegerd, but if into the secular, it would have

⁵⁸ Cf. *infra*, pp. 73f.

been connected with Maruthas' arrival, i.e., arrival of envoys for treaty under 1 Yezdegerd. The discrepancy would force a solution only when a full ecclesiastico-secular chronicle such as those dealt with here would attempt to combine the one with the other. It would then be perfectly natural to assume (modern scholars have done so) that Maruthas' activity formed but a phase of the negotiations for the treaty and, therefore, to decide in favor of 1 Yezdegerd. This view was taken by the 'secondary list,' which BarH adopts, while Mari and Amri provide a refuge for remnants of the early Church historian.

It is also from the source allied to Socrates that BarH derives the correct schedule of Maruthas' two journeys; after the restoration of the catholicate, he went home to take part in the General Council of Constantinople, and subsequently reentered Iran to assist at the synod of 410. As a matter of fact, the meeting attended by the bishop was not the illustrious General Council, but the very disreputable Synod of the Oak.⁵⁹ The one has been substituted for the other by 'conjecture'; obviously, such a blemish could not be left on the record of the great hero of the Persian Church, him who had so prominent a share in shaping its final constitution just before it turned Nestorian.

IV.

The 'primary list' can thus be reconstructed from its remains in the chronicles with much greater success for the later, than for the earlier, half of the fourth century. This purely textual restoration can be proven beyond all doubt exact in its essentials. We can demonstrate absolutely from sources of magisterial authority, contemporary and near-contemporary, that (1) Sapor II put a stop to the persecution many years before his end, and (2) the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon remained vacant from his death to the elevation of Isaac; we can, if we compare the chronicles, show with practical certainty that (3) Isaac became catholicus in 3 Yezdegerd. We begin with the last.

Bahram IV was assassinated on Sept. 6, 399, and one of the first acts of his successor, Yezdegerd I, was to threaten Rome with war.⁶⁰ Probably before

⁵⁹ That between 399 and 410 Maruthas did not attend a council held in 381 needs no proof. Whether he was actually present at that of Constantinople does not concern us here, but it is unanimously denied by modern scholars; cf. Labourt (cf. *supra*, n. 28) 88, n. 2; Westphal (cf. *supra*, n. 2) 130f.; O. Braun, *De sancta nicaena synodo* (Kirchengeschichtl. Studien hrsg. Knöpfler-Schrörs-Sdralek 4.3; Münster i.W. 1898) 3f. BarH does not say explicitly that Maruthas was present at the Council of Constantinople, but in my opinion, it is undoubtedly what he means.

⁶⁰ ChrS V 307; Claudian, in *Eutr.* 2.474-84; Soz. 9.4 (cf. 9.1-3); Cod. Just. 4.63.4 (dated March 23, 409 by O. Seeck, *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste 311-476*, Stuttgart 1919, 317). ChrS says that Bahram IV lived only 18 days of his last yr., which brings us down to Sept. 6, 399. For the date of the agreement to negotiate the differences, cf. E. De mougeot,

the end of 399, however, he was induced to negotiate the issue instead. But Sozomen refers to this crisis in an entirely different context, in connection with the beginning of Theodosius II's reign on May 1, 408. The historian's theme at this point is that piety alone suffices for the salvation of princes, and he demonstrates it by a number of examples. The very first instance he gives is that of the Persians, who, though on the verge of taking up arms, were persuaded to make a treaty of 100 yrs., and the immediately following proof is the deliverance of the Eastern Empire by the sudden death of Stilicho on Aug. 23, 408. Sozomen intends thus plainly to convey that the danger, which had hung over the State since 399 and which no human endeavor had been able to set aside, was, owing to the prayers of the royal family, finally dissipated by a definitive agreement shortly after Theodosius' accession. That a formal settlement was reached between May 1 and Aug. 23, 408, is confirmed by a law of March 23, 409, which strives to eliminate spying (always a Persian grievance) by providing rigid control of the border.

Frequent embassies, remarks Socrates⁶¹ in introducing his account of Maruthas, are interchanged between Rome and Persia, and it happened that the bishop of Martyropolis was twice selected for such honors. On the first, he cured Yezdegerd I of the headache and, by his religion and personality, won great ascendancy over him. The favor enjoyed by a prominent Christian precipitated a bitter conflict with the Zoroastrian clergy, who attempted by a hoax to scare the king away from the bishop. When the envoy exposed it, the monarch summarily decimated the magi, and permitted the prelate to erect churches wherever he wished; thenceforward religion was spread wide

De l'unité à la division de l'Empire Romain 395-410: Essai sur le gouvernement impérial (Paris 1951) 233, 344. (It suffices to refer the reader to this very careful and painstaking work, which has an exhaustive bibliography both of sources and modern treatises.) Scholars take Claudian to mean that Persia threatened war before the fall of Eutropius; cf. Demougeot 225f. That this is chronologically impossible has already been pointed out by E. W. Brooks, CMH I 459, n. 2. The pretorian prefect fell on Aug. 17, 399; cf. Demougeot 230, 232. To reconcile the sources, Nöldeke (cf. *supra*, n. 7) 418 suggests that Bahram IV was assassinated in summer 399, that a brief period of anarchy followed, and that Yezdegerd counted his yrs. only from the following Persian New Year. Claudian, however, says distinctly 'armatum rursus Babylona minari rege novo'; whom could 'rege novo' allude to but Yezdegerd, particularly when we consider the protracted negotiations for peace? The inference drawn above from Soz. has not been made by other students of the subject; cf. Demougeot 344 n. 702; Tillemont, *Hist. des empereurs* VI (Venice 1739), 'Theodose II,' art. 1 (towards end). Nevertheless, the inference seems to me obvious, if we consider that Claudian speaks of a threat of war, that the oriental chronicles all put a truce in 1 Yezdegerd, that Socrates remarks about the frequency of embassies in just this connection, and that the law implementing the treaty appeared only in 409. Actually, Demougeot (233 n. 603; 344) comes virtually to the same conclusion, but regards the relationship as an 'entente cordiale.' This agrees very ill, it seems to me, with the tone of Sozomen's narrative.

⁶¹ *Hist. eccl.* 7.8, 10; 6.15, 19; Soz. 8.16; cf. *infra*, n. 67.

among the Persians. Maruthas went back to Constantinople, but not long afterwards was sent again to the Iranian court. Again the pagan priests did all in their power to prevent his obtaining an audience, but he triumphed over every wile, and possessed the confidence of Yezdegerd as completely as ever. This episode took place about the time of Alaric's sack of Rome on Aug. 24, 410. Elsewhere it is incidentally mentioned that Maruthas attended the Synod of the Oak. We cannot tell from the above report, it should be noted, whether the first or the second journey was made about 410, nor in what relation either stood to the Synod of the Oak. If anything, the closing reference to the death of Yezdegerd (421/22) might induce us to set both after 410.

The doubt is dispelled by a passage in John Chrysostom. To him, Maruthas, strange as it may seem in the light of his subsequent conduct, undoubtedly owed his great distinction. It was the well-known missionary zeal of the patriarch that first conceived the brilliant project of sending a Christian bishop and physician as envoy to further the peace and progress of the Church in Persia and that determined the selection of the Mesopotamian prelate for the role. This is clear not only from the statements of the saint's panegyrists, Theodoret and Proclus of Constantinople,⁶² giving him full credit for the spread of the faith there, but also from his own epistle 14 to Olympias in Oct. 404:

Continue to cultivate assiduously Bishop Maruthas so as to pull him out of the well. I need him badly because of the situation in Persia. Find out, too, if you should get the chance, what success he has had there and why he is here and let me know if you delivered the two letters I sent him. Should he wish to write me, I'll answer him; but if he shouldn't, and if he informs you whether he has done any good there and whether he might gain some success by going back again — it was only for this reason that I was anxious to meet him myself.⁶³

⁶² PG 104.233A (Theodoret's encomium quoted in Phot. *Bibl.* 273); 65.832B (Proclus). These are apparently the only independent witnesses to Chrysostom's missionary activities; cf. Chrys. Baur, *Der Hl. Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit* (Munich 1929-30) II 326f. Baur is noncommittal about Theodoret's encomium and about Proclus; cf. I xixf. On the other hand, Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.* XI (Venice 1732), 'S. Jean Chrys.' art 107, accepts them without demur. The wording of Theodoret's encomium is very striking: 'Nay more, you replied to the Persian bowman with the arrow of your preaching, and they, though clothed in steel, adore the Crucified. Your tongue overcame the crafty devices of Chaldaeans and magi, and barren Persia burst into flower with houses of prayer. No longer was Babylon alien to the true worship.' The writer, it is obvious, purposely is paraphrasing Socrates' description of Maruthas' work and ascribing it directly to St. John Chrysostom.

⁶³ PG 52.618. Tillemont *loc. cit.* remarks that Chrysostom never dreamt of employing anybody but Maruthas for the Persian affair, but whether he means by this that the saint had also procured the appointment of Maruthas prior to the letter is not altogether clear to me. O. Braun, *Nic. syn.* 3-5, believes that the best way to explain Maruthas' favor with Arcadius is to suppose that Chrysostom had heightened, if not aroused, the emperor's

The sentiment, 'I need him badly because of the situation in Persia' unmistakably insinuates that the writer regarded the work in Persia as his own and Maruthas as merely his instrument. Obviously, St. John has no idea of the tremendous progress of which Socrates informs us, and, in fact, labors under the opposite impression that little or nothing has been accomplished or is likely to be accomplished. For him, consequently, the 'situation in Persia' in 404⁶⁴ remains precisely what it was before Maruthas set out at all; Chrysostom thinks of the Church there as still outlawed and persecuted. To write under such circumstances 'I need him badly because of the situation in Persia' definitely indicates that he had made the plight of Christianity in that country his own concern from the beginning and had from the start settled on Maruthas as the best man to use in negotiating with the Sassanid monarch — an implication strongly reenforced by the context. Chrysostom always believed that his exile would not last but that he would soon recover his see and influence at court, and this is the thought behind both his endeavor to wean Maruthas away from his enemies and the question whether a later effort might effect what the earlier had not; he means that upon his restoration in the not too distant future he will see to it that the Mesopotamian prelate is again sent as ambassador. We could readily understand such an attitude, if, by contrast, we supposed that he had had nothing to do with Maruthas' appointment, but had learnt all about his success with Yezdegerd, and, as a result, had decided that he 'needed him badly' for some further plans. But, since Chrysostom had no information of the sort whatever, it

interest in Persian Christianity and himself introduced the Mesopotamian prelate to the court; Braun further conjectures that, as Maruthas had studied medicine, he had probably done so in Antioch and had there first become acquainted with Chrysostom. No other scholar gives St. John any credit at all for Maruthas' role; cf. also *infra*, pp. 78-80. St. John's pessimism about Maruthas' success may simply result from his having heard nothing and jumping thence to the conclusion that there was nothing to hear; it may, too, reflect a general disappointment with the negotiations for a treaty; these must have registered no appreciable gain, since they were to drag on still for four years, and even then, so Soz. implies, to reach a conclusion rather suddenly and unexpectedly.

⁶⁴ J. Stilling, *De S. Joanne Chrysostomo ep. Cplo. et ecclesiae doctore prope Comana in Ponto comment. hist.* (AS Sept. IV; Paris-Rome 1868) 630DE, dates ep. 14 in Oct. 404; at all events, it was certainly after the exile in June 404. Tillemont, *op. cit.*, art. 106, believes that Maruthas made a journey to Persia between the Synod of the Oak (Sept. 403; cf. *infra*, n. 67) and the letter to Olympias in Oct. 404. He did not have the oriental sources at his disposal that we command and could not know that Maruthas had gone there before the Synod of the Oak. At all events, this supposition is impossible. Theophilus and the rest of John's enemies fled Constantinople at the beginning of winter and returned to their sees (Socr. 6.17; Soz. 8.19). John had fallen into disgrace again by Christmas and the bishops had returned and condemned him again by Easter (Socr. 6.18; Soz. 8.20f.). There is no reason whatever to suppose that Maruthas did not participate in all these proceedings, particularly since Chrysostom's letters show him still an enemy and still in Constantinople at the moment of writing. Manifestly, there was no time for a trip to Persia and return.

is clear that he had formed a judgment of Maruthas' qualifications long before, had, in fact, recommended him for the embassy, just as he purposed to do again, if opportunity offered. Normally, then, Maruthas must have considered it his first duty to report to the patriarchal palace, yet the letter expressly declares that no meeting has taken place. The Mesopotamian's peculiar conduct admits of only one explanation — he must have been on his way back from his first embassy and have reached Chalcedon after the tide had turned definitely against St. John Chrysostom, i.e., after May 403.⁶⁵ Nothing else will account for the fact that the very man directly responsible for Maruthas' mission has never been able to get in touch with him and has never even heard of his success.

Into this framework, furnished by the western writers, dovetails neatly the information supplied by the oriental sources. The primacy among them belongs naturally to the contemporary minutes of Isaac's synod in 410 and Dadisho's in 424.⁶⁶ The former states that the events recorded took place in 11 Yezdegerd I (Aug. 16, 409/10) after the persecution had ceased by royal decree, the churches had been rebuilt, prisons thrown open, and complete freedom granted Christianity. All this had occurred at the time and on the occasion of Isaac's elevation to the catholicate, through the efforts of Bishop Maruthas, who, as ambassador, negotiated the peace between West and East, and who labored for the acceptance of the western canonical discipline. It was effected also through the solicitude of the Byzantine hierarchy, Porphyrius of Antioch, Paquida of Edessa, et al., who addressed a letter to Yezdegerd requesting permission for the synod then assembled... 'Peace and tranquillity have been won through the goings and comings of Isaac with the king but above all since the day when Bishop Maruthas arrived here.' The record of Dadisho's council says that a schism arose against Isaac despite the fact that through his favor and intimacy with the monarch he had restored the catholicate after an interruption of 22 yrs. His antagonists succeeded by calumny in so turning Yezdegerd against him that he could almost have been imprisoned. News of this reached the western fathers, who prevailed on the Emperor to send Maruthas as envoy, and he got permission to hold the synod, etc. The information in the chronicles has been adequately summarized above.

To direct our attention to the oriental sources, it will be observed that the synod of 410 and ChrS both telescope events from their point of view as Sozomen does from his. The reign of Yezdegerd marked a new era in the history of Persian Christianity; for the first time it won official recognition, it emerged from its catacombs. The royal edict of toleration, the restoration

⁶⁵ Demougeot 315.

⁶⁶ *Syn. or.* (cf. *supra*, n. 29) 254-56, 261 (Isaac's); 292f. (Dadisho's). For the chronicles, cf. *supra*, n. 43.

of the catholicate in the person of Isaac, the reorganization of cult, discipline and hierarchy by the synod of 410, the permanent settlement with Rome, the warm and effective cooperation of the Church of the West embodied in the superlative diplomacy of Maruthas — all were regarded as only details of a single epoch-making occurrence, 'the resurrection,' in the glowing words of the council, 'that we shared, the awakening that we witnessed, the redemption that we gained, the deep peace that was ours.' This, the contemporary outlook, finds expression in both the synodal record and ChrS with the difference that the former associates the complex with its culmination in 410, the latter with its inauguration in the early years of Yezdegerd. As a result, both seem to allow but a brief interval between Isaac's election and the assembly of 410.

This impression is readily offset by appeal to the acts of Dadisho. We learn there that after Isaac's promotion a schism broke out, his opponents' intrigues brought him into disgrace with the court, his plight reached the ears of the western bishops, they in turn induced the emperor to send Maruthas, the Mesopotamian prelate regained for Isaac the favor of Yezdegerd, who was persuaded to support his claims, and finally all was consolidated in the council. Such an episode not only demands a considerable interval, but also took place, as the record avers, in Maruthas' absence. Since Isaac's election, according to the acts of 410, was due above all to the influence of that bishop, it must then have occurred on the first of the two journeys with which Socrates credits him in these years. Again, we are informed by the same minutes that the Persian metropolitan received his see simultaneously with the edict of toleration, and by the Greek historian that the ambassador, during his earlier stay, was permitted to build churches and spread the faith far and wide.

So far, then, it has been established that Arcadius and Yezdegerd I made a truce (not, strictly speaking, a treaty, though every Perso-Byzantine 'treaty' actually amounted to no more than a truce) in the first few months of the latter's reign. Furthermore, we know from Socrates that Maruthas made two journeys. The second began before Aug. 1, 409, the date of the death of Paqida of Edessa,⁶⁷ one of the bishops signing the letter that the envoy

⁶⁷ ChrEd (cf. *supra*, n. 31) 106 Hallier, 6 Guidi. For Synod of Oak, cf. Baur II 204 n. 6. For beginning of Maruthas' embassy, cf. *infra*, p. 80. That Maruthas made two journeys between 399 and 410 is, I believe, established by the reasons above, and this is all that really concerns the present paper about the very disputed question of the number of his missions; cf. Braun, *Nic. syn.* 4, 5 n. 4, 7, 8; Westphal 125-27, 141f.; Labourt 88f. n. 5, 89 n. 5, 90 n. 1. All these scholars agree that the prelate did go twice to Persia between 399 and 410, while Westphal and Labourt assign him a third embassy later. I agree with Braun that the third mission is a fiction. It would take too long to detail the argument here, but it may be summarized. It should be noted that all the sources without exception give Maruthas two journeys and only two journeys, but differ merely as to their distri-

brought to Yezdegerd. The first embassy ended some time before the Synod of the Oak in Sept. 403. The tide turned definitely against Chrysostom only after May 403, and Maruthas' absolute refusal to communicate with him indicates that he had scarcely returned long before that time. Therefore, he had beyond all doubt been in Persia during 3 Yezdegerd (Aug. 18, 401/2), and, consequently, this is a perfectly possible date for Isaac's consecration.

But, can we go farther and show that he had been commissioned too late to arrive in 1 Yezdegerd (Aug. 19, 399/400), and that, as a result, this is an impossible date for Isaac's consecration? We could answer unhesitatingly in the affirmative if Maruthas' office depended on political factors.⁶⁸ Aurelianus, created pretorian prefect after the fall of Eutropius on Aug. 17, 399, was superseded by his brother and bitter enemy, Caesarius, in the early part of 400. The latter, after the massacre of the Goths on July 12, 400, sought a compromise with the nationalists and, in August, began to admit them to office. Aurelianus did not himself gain control until somewhat later. If one considers the ferocious hostility between the two parties, the harsh reprisals at each shift of government and the thirst of the leaders for even the blood of their rivals, it is a foregone conclusion that any embassy sent by one side would have been immediately recalled by the other and its high-ranking members disgraced. This is how we know for certain that the truce with Yezdegerd must have been struck in the early months of his reign, because the credentials of any envoy despatched at his accession would inevitably have been voided in early 400. Similarly, we might maintain that Maruthas, returning in mid-403 with Aurelianus prefect, could not have been commissioned before the compromise phase of Caesarius' tenure, i.e., before Aug. 400, and that would put 1 Yezdegerd (Aug. 19, 399/400) out of the question for Isaac's elevation.

In my estimation, such a contention would have little weight.⁶⁹ Though

bution. As I have pointed out, the source allied with Socrates caused confusion in the date of Isaac's accession. In like manner, it is my view that Mari, in attempting to adjust the two trips related in the same source to the narrative of ChrS, was misled by the latter's telescoping of events to identify the whole series of occurrences from Isaac's election to the synod of 410 with Maruthas' first embassy (this was all the easier after he had himself associated the synod of 410 with the resignation of Qayuma and accession of Isaac). He had then to find room for the second mission and simply 'conjectured' that he accompanied Acacius.

⁶⁸ Demougeot 230, n. 575, 251, 259f., 265.

⁶⁹ Braun, *Nic. syn.* 4, and Westphal 126 both think that Maruthas' mission was primarily political; for Labourt 87 a bishop accompanied every embassy. Isaac's synod describes him as 'mediator of peace between East and West'; cf. *Syn. or.* 255. Among the chroniclers, only BarH speaks of him as negotiating the peace; cf. *supra*, n. 43. These statements of the sources I interpret, as I say above, as referring to his official status; no doubt his status was that of a member of the peace commission.

ranking officially, no doubt, as ambassador of the State, Maruthas really acted as plenipotentiary of the Byzantine Church to the Persian, to champion the cause of religion with the Sassanid monarch and to conform the local with the ecumenical discipline. In the first place, it is churchmen that inspire his mission, John Chrysostom originally, and later the hierarchy of Syria. Though none of the sources, one must admit, explicitly excludes a political role, yet, all positively depict him as functioning in a purely religious capacity. Chrysostom, according to the letter quoted above, hasn't heard a word of what has been accomplished, yet takes for granted that the envoy has been engaged in ecclesiastical business; Socrates and the synodal records hail him as the victor over the wickedness and deceit of the pagan priesthood; he regains freedom for Christianity, rebuilds its edifices, restores its organization, and this is the sole achievement recorded of him. Though the negotiations between the two Empires must have continued without much interruption between 403 and 408, when the treaty was ratified, yet the Mesopotamian prelate had no part in them. That he was absent from Persia for some time is shown by the progress of schism and the success of the machinations against Isaac. When he does return on a second trip, it is only at the urgent request of the patriarch of Antioch and his principal suffragans,⁷⁰ exclusively for the purpose, moreover, of dealing with a new crisis in the Church, and finally he carries a letter from the bishops, i.e., functions mainly as their intermediary rather than the court's.

Such a role, altogether outside the sphere of partisan politics, might well have remained unaffected by even radical changes in the administration, so long, particularly, as its chief sponsor, Chrysostom, himself above factional wrangles, preserved his authority. Maruthas' promotion, if made, say, under Caesarius, would, it seems to me, have been felt as emanating rather from the patriarch than from the prefect, and would not have incurred the stigma of association with Gainas. To all appearances, the Mesopotamian's career was more closely bound up with John's than any civil official's. His recall at just the moment of his patron's disgrace may be due to coincidence, but, if so, a curious one. It is truly amazing, however, that he was not constituted a regular member of the legation at the earliest opportunity after 403. Rome, faced with the spectre of war when she was never less prepared, and engaged in difficult and delicate conversations to avert the disaster, had in him a man unique in the esteem and regard of Yezdegerd, whose personal ascendancy and medical skill might at any moment have tipped the balance in her favor. Yet, the government ignored him and had, apparently, no intention ever of exploiting his possibilities unless its attention had been called by the demand of the Syrian bishops. Of this phenomenon, the sources

⁷⁰ *Syn. or.* 293; cf. *supra*, p. 76.

supply no explanation, but it may be suspected that he was somehow involved in the downfall of Chrysostom despite his efforts to dissociate himself from his patron and ingratiate himself with the party in power. At all events, the argument drawn from Maruthas' having functioned under Aurelianus has little, if any, force. However, the part played by Chrysostom does provide a lower limit for the beginning of the mission. As the saint's influence with the court started to decline early in 401,⁷¹ the departure for Persia took place, in all probability, before then. Consequently, the embassy was finished in June 403 and had lasted at least from autumn or winter 400. But Chrysostom's prestige stood as high in 399 as in 400, and his power could have moved Maruthas' appointment just as well then as later. So, nothing excludes 1 Yezdegerd as a possible date.

Another and perhaps more satisfactory approach to the problem is from the point of view of Iran's internal conditions. Socrates makes clear that Yezdegerd did not emancipate Christianity until he had first broken the might of the Zoroastrian clergy in a bloody purge.⁷² Behind this conflict lies a history. The priestly caste, though strong from the beginning of the Sassanid Empire, apparently did not reach its acme until after the death of Sapor II, who held it in leash for the later years of his reign.⁷³ Under his successors, however, the magi carried on the persecution at will;⁷⁴ Ardashir II, who hated them, and Sapor III, a friend of Rome, dared not oppose them. Bahram IV, also an ally of the West, had to bow to their will, and even Yezdegerd did not venture at first to curb their power. Yet, both these last-named sovereigns had treated the Christian prisoners of war with singular kindness.⁷⁵ After pillaging the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire in 395, the Huns invaded Persia only to suffer a severe defeat and lose all their booty including a number of captives. These latter were led to Ctesiphon, allotted a generous ration from the royal treasury, ultimately permitted to return home, and were ever afterwards high in praise of Yezdegerd's goodness of heart. It may perhaps have been in connection with this episode that Isaac (before his consecration, naturally) first had occasion to become acquainted with that monarch. In any case, he had been negotiating before Maruthas appeared on the scene; so much is implied by the wording of the synod of 410, 'peace had been won by the goings and comings of Isaac but especially since the day when Bishop Maruthas arrived.' Yezdegerd had

⁷¹ Demougeot 303f.

⁷² Socrates says that Yezdegerd decimated the magi; cf. *supra*, p. 73.

⁷³ Sapor II put a stop to the persecution of the Christians; cf. *infra*, pp. 84-86.

⁷⁴ ChrS V 260, 306. That persecution raged under both Sapor III and Bahram IV is proven *infra*, pp. 83f.

⁷⁵ *Chron. misc. (Liber calipharam)* tr. by J.-B. Chabot (CSCO 4; Paris-Rome-Leipzig 1904) 106f.

thus from his accession shown himself disposed to a milder policy toward Christianity, but, despite his inclination, had taken no steps to temper the severity of the laws nor interfered with their execution by the Mazdeists.⁷⁶ Prudence would demand that he consolidate his own position and secure himself on the throne first before coming to grips with the most formidable class in Persian society.

In view of these circumstances, then, 3 Yezdegerd has a distinct advantage over 1 Yezdegerd. After all, the edict of toleration of Christianity constituted as great a revolution in the Iranian polity as ever the corresponding measure by Constantine, with the additional hazard that the Zoroastrian clergy had never been more powerful while the official paganism of Rome had lost much of its hold. Yezdegerd would not have dared launch upon such a life-and-death struggle until he had disposed his forces strategically and placed in posts of responsibility throughout his realm men upon whom he could absolutely depend. It is far more likely than not that such a consolidation of his authority took more than one year. As for Maruthas, the sources agree that the favor openly displayed toward him by the king touched off the explosion; we find this not only in Socrates, but also in the Sassanid 'Book of the Kings,' which condemns Yezdegerd bitterly for despising the advice of his countrymen but lending an ever ready ear to that of foreign embassies.⁷⁷ That the envoy's arrival played so decisive a role probably means that it took place when the conflict between king and priesthood was coming to a head. Nevertheless, though these considerations create a very strong probability in favor of 3 Yezdegerd, they do not give us certainty. After all, the monarch may have acted fast and taken the magi completely by surprise, ambushed them, for instance, when their leaders were all gathered together for some great festival.

From the contemporary and near-contemporary sources, therefore, we get a good picture of Maruthas' activities. The synodal acts inform us that he procured the edict of toleration and the restoration of the catholicate, that, however, during an absence of his, schism broke out and brought Isaac into disgrace, but, upon his return, he set all to rights and reorganized the Persian Church on a firm foundation in the council of 410. This dovetails perfectly

⁷⁶ *De civ. Dei* 18.52 is often quoted as proof that Yezdegerd I persecuted the Christians at the beginning of his reign; cf. Demougeot 225, n. 554. However, St. Augustine refers to the persecution at the end of the reign, since Book 18 was written shortly before 425; cf. Schanz-Hosius-Krüger, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* IV 2 (Handb. d. klass. Altertumswiss. 8; Munich 1920) 418. That Yezdegerd did begin by persecuting the Church is explicitly stated by BarH 46; ChrS V 317 (Letter of Arcadius, also quoted by Amri 14.14-24). Westphal (p. 136) gets the impression from this letter that Yezdegerd had already ruled some time when it was supposedly written.

⁷⁷ Tab. 74 Nöld. (cf. *supra*, n. 7).

into Socrates' narrative, supplemented by Chrysostom; Maruthas made two journeys at an interval of five or six years, the one ending with his arrival at Constantinople about June 403, the other commencing before Aug. 1, 409. All this time, too, a serious crisis threatened between the two Empires; a formal agreement to negotiate their differences was made in 1 Yezdegerd (399), but a final settlement was not reached until summer 408, even then rather unexpectedly. Not only against the background of this explosive international situation did Maruthas carry out his earlier mission, but also with embittered party strife raging at home and a veritable social revolution imminent in Persia. The contemporary and near-contemporary sources fail to mention the exact date of the envoy's first departure abroad. We know that, because of the violent factionalism in his own country, if he had been connected in any civil capacity with the arrangement of the treaty, he could have been commissioned no earlier than Aug. 400, too late for Isaac to have been elected in 1 Yezdegerd (Aug. 19, 399/400). But he had no genuine civilian function, and it was precisely for that reason that in Persia his favorable reception by Yezdegerd precipitated the conflict between throne and priesthood; the king's complete victory, arguing, as it does, full preparation, argues strongly also for the greater likelihood of 3 Yezdegerd for Isaac's election. For, all the accounts and all the circumstances of the bishop's career as an ambassador convey the impression vividly that he was not, except by a fiction, an emissary of the State, but a plenipotentiary of the Church; that he had nothing to do with the making of the treaty, but was authorized exclusively by ecclesiastics for an exclusively ecclesiastical task, to plead with the Sassanid monarch for the legal recognition of Persian Christianity, modernize and reorganize it.

If we now turn back to the patriarchal chronicles,⁷⁸ we will recall that (1) BarH makes Maruthas one of the negotiators of the treaty, and the edict of toleration one of the phases of the treaty; (2) Mari and Amri depict Maruthas arriving after the treaty as a special envoy for ecclesiastical affairs and look upon the edict of toleration as distinct from the treaty; and (3) it was inferred that the divergence arises because BarH's source knew of a treaty in 1 Yezdegerd and assumed that it embraced the edict of toleration, but Mari-Amri's authority knew that Maruthas' arrival followed the treaty and that the edict of toleration was issued only in 3 Yezdegerd. But the contemporary and near-contemporary documents prove that (1) there was actually in 1 Yezdegerd a formal truce (nobody would quarrel with the Syriac writers for terming this a treaty); (2) Maruthas did have a special mission for exclusively ecclesiastical affairs, and the edict of toleration was entirely distinct from the treaty, since effective legal recognition was granted Chris-

⁷⁸ *Supra*, pp. 70-72.

tianity years before the treaty proper was concluded, independently of it and at a time when there could have been no immediate prospect of its ever being concluded; and (3) Socrates implies that the prelate had come not too long before the edict of toleration, and, if that was issued in 3 Yezdegerd, then, after the 'treaty' of 399. In short, the independent authorities bear out Mari-Amri to so great an extent as to render it practically certain that Isaac's election took place in 3 Yezdegerd.

To conclude, Isaac's accession occurred in 3 Yezdegerd (Aug. 18, 401/2). To fix the date has, it must be confessed, involved a discussion out of proportion to its importance, though it has a value to which we shall call attention presently.⁷⁹ Incidentally, we have gained a clearer picture of relations between Rome and Persia during the first half of Yezdegerd's reign, a new realization of the importance of St. John Chrysostom in the formation of the Iranian Church, a better idea of Maruthas' personality and role, of the chronology, and of the complicated affinities of the patriarchal chronicles of Mari, BarH, and Amri.

V.

At all events, the space devoted to the various points of this paper is in inverse ratio to their consequence. Its really significant contributions can be established absolutely and irrefutably, yet briefly. The first is that, as the above reconstructed 'primary list' requires, Tomarsa and Qayuma are an interpolation and Isaac's inauguration was preceded by a vacancy of 22 yrs. This is demonstrated by two irreproachable documents. The categorical assertion of the synod of Dadisho has been quoted above⁸⁰ to the effect that the succession had been interrupted for 22 yrs. prior to Isaac. Again, we have the word of a contemporary that persecution raged fiercely during the reign of Sapor III despite his cordiality towards Rome. In 387, i.e., 4 or 5 Sapor III, John Chrysostom writes: 'The extraordinary thing is that Christianity flourishes not only here but also among the Persians, though they still wage war on it even now. In fact, there are at this moment throngs of martyrs among them.'⁸¹ There is no reason to be looking for rhetorical exaggeration in this affirmation, since it but corroborates the synod. The situation of the Church under Sapor III, with the wholesale massacres, thus

⁷⁹ *Infra*, p. 84.

⁸⁰ *Supra*, p. 76.

⁸¹ *Contra Iudaeos et gentiles quod Christus sit Deus*, PG 48.814. The context is that the expansion of Christianity proves the divinity of Christ; it has spread not only among the Romans but also among the Persians and the barbarians — and that, too, despite all obstacles. 'The extraordinary thing is...' The treatise was composed shortly before Aug. 29, 387; cf. G. Rauschen, *Jahrbücher der christlichen Kirche unter dem Kaiser Theodosius dem Grossen* (Freiburg i.B. 1897) 512.

closely resembled the most unrestrained period under Sapor II, when a bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon survived so brief a time in office that the Christians felt it useless any longer to elect one. The testimony of two reliable contemporary witnesses to the vacancy with its attendant persecution puts that fact beyond dispute, and reenforces outstandingly the findings of the textual argument that Tomarsa and Qayuma were interpolated by the 'secondary list.'

Unassailable evidence likewise guarantees the most startling disclosure of the 'primary list,' that peace was restored to the Church before Sapor II's death. To return to the synod of Dadisho, if Isaac was promoted in 3 Yezdegerd, Aug. 18, 401/2, and if the succession was interrupted for only 22 yrs. previously, i.e., 379/80-401/2, then a metropolitan functioned in the last full year of Sapor II, 378/79, and over into his partial final year, 379/80. In other words, there was a catholicus at Seleucia-Ctesiphon towards the end of the reign of Sapor II. This conclusion has been staring scholars in the face for over fifty years, and I don't know why nobody has drawn it; I presume that everybody has been hypnotized by the acts. But it's there; it's irresistibly and ineluctably there. And this is why it is of some value to know the exact date of Isaac's accession. The chroniclers⁸² maintain that Sapor II issued a genuine edict of toleration, 'permitted the churches to be rebuilt.' The decree would not necessarily have to remain in force until his death, but it is what would normally be expected. If Isaac was consecrated in 1 Yezdegerd, then the last previous metropolitan had functioned only until within 2 yrs. of Sapor's decease, but if the office continued right up to the advent of his successor, Ardashir II, that would tend to show that a real law of religious liberty had been passed and was enforced as long as Sapor II lived to do so. To reject this testimony is impossible. The council was held in 424, within 22 yrs. of the reinstitution of the patriarchate and 44 yrs. of Sapor II's decease. It is safe to say that most of those in attendance had reached the age of sixty-five, and, therefore, at the date of the king's passing, had been adults and could distinctly recall the latter part of his rule. The statement in the minutes has, then, actually a multitude of eye-

⁸² *Supra*, pp. 69f. Westphal, p. 80, points out that Jovian could not have imposed the edict of toleration as a stipulation of the treaty with Sapor. This is perfectly true. As a matter of fact, if the emperor had made any such condition, it is inconceivable that it would not have been mentioned by his Christian apologists. It seems to me, however, that the acts of the martyrs give a very distorted portrait of Sapor II; that he was not personally opposed to Christianity but forced into persecution largely by the power of the magi and provoked by the treason of his Christian subjects; that after his victory over Jovian his supremacy stood unchallenged at home and he was in a position to legislate as he pleased, while the peace with Rome eliminated the other incitement. It is an interesting fact that legend has preserved a vivid memory of the respite under Sapor II; cf. Westphal, *loc. cit.*; Labourt 305, n. 1; also *supra*, n. 42.

witnesses to guarantee it. Therefore, to substantiate the essential point of the 'primary list,' namely, that Sapor II himself put a stop to the bloody war on Christianity, we have a declaration in the official record of a council, most of those present at which could testify from personal experience to the truth of that declaration.

Now, the same conclusion follows with the same inevitability from the acts, which, moreover, supply the additional information that persecution ceased some time before Sapor's end. The full reconstructed 'primary list' runs as follows: Simeon bar Sabbae, consecration (synod against Papa), 6 Sapor II (314/15); catholicus, 18 yrs., 18 Sapor II (death of Papa) to 36 Sapor II (326/27-344/45); Shahdost-Barbashmin-vacancy, 20 yrs., 36-56 Sapor II (344/45-364/65); Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 56-64 Sapor II (364/65-372/73); Qayuma, 7 yrs., 64 Sapor II to 1 Ardashir II (372/73-379/80); vacancy, 22 yrs., 1 Ardashir II to 3 Yezdegerd I (379/80-401/2); Isaac, from 3 Yezdegerd (401/2). (The original figures for Shahdost, Barbashmin and the ensuing vacancy have, as said before,⁸³ been lost beyond recovery.) In dealing with the acts we must distinguish the Era Pers., which was added later, from the rest of the information, which comes from an eye-witness,⁸⁴ and it is the latter only that can provide a solid foundation for argument. It proves the 'primary list' correct to the year. Shahdost, according to his Passion, was captured about Febr. and put to death after July 22, while Barbashmin, according to his, was seized in July, martyred June 11, and his term followed by a vacancy of 20 yrs. 'more or less.'⁸⁵ Whether the hagiographer included the time of imprisonment in the tenure is hard to say. ChrArb informs us that Abraham was chosen metropolitan of Arbela to carry on while John was in jail.⁸⁶ This may have occurred also in the capital, and, of course, in computing the duration of the break after Barbashmin, it is a nice question whether one ought to count from the arrest rather than from the martyrdom; after all, it was at the former event that the office ceased effectively. Furthermore, the documents say nothing about an interval before or after Shahdost.

We might, then, make the following reconstruction: Simeon, martyred Sept. 14, 344, 36 Sapor II (Sept. 1, 344/45);⁸⁷ Shahdost, arrested Febr. 345 and martyred after July 22, 345, still in 36 Sapor; Barbashmin, elected during Shahdost's incarceration and arrested himself in July 345, still in 36 Sapor, but martyred June 11, 346, 37 Sapor (Sept. 1, 345/46); vacancy, if reckoned from the arrest, 20 yrs., 36-56 Sapor, but if from the martyrdom, 19 yrs., 37-56 Sapor. The round number for the interregnum, however, would not

⁸³ *Supra*, p. 51f.

⁸⁴ *Infra*, p. 87.

⁸⁵ Cf. *supra*, n. 22. The calendar is Persian; cf. *supra*, n. 6.

⁸⁶ 78 Sachau, 184 Zorell (cf. *supra*, n. 30).

⁸⁷ Cf. *supra*, n. 20.

be strained, if 20 yrs. 'more or less' were interpreted as low as 18 yrs. In that case, Barbashmin's arrest would fall in 346, 37 Sapor, and his martyrdom in 347, 38 Sapor, reducing the interval to 19/18 yrs.; or his arrest might even be set as late as 38 Sapor and the martyrdom in 39 Sapor, but, since the remainder, 17 yrs., 39-56 Sapor, would be too small to justify the expression, 20 yrs. 'more or less,' we'd have to make up our minds definitely to reckon the vacancy only from the arrest, 18 yrs., 38-56 Sapor; Shahdost might be assigned to 36, 37, or 38 Sapor, as suited our fancy, and not necessarily in the same year as Barbashmin's arrest. Any of these possibilities will fit the 'primary list.' Consequently, the acts do much more than merely buttress the synod of Dadisho, they add the further information that the see of Seleucia was occupied for a good many years before Sapor's death, and thus further confirm the 'primary list.'

The same holds true, if we take Era Pers. into consideration, save only that the choice is narrowed down to 36 or 37 Sapor for Barbashmin's arrest depending on whether we make 1 Pers. correspond to 31 or 32 Sapor.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, the notice on Shahdost's Passion is wrong, 2 Pers. The narrative refers it to the year after Simeon's martyrdom, i.e., 37 Sapor, which, however, as we see from Barbashmin, ought to be 6 Pers. Be this as it may, we can readjust the list accordingly: Simeon, died 36 Sapor II; Shahdost, arrested Febr. 346 and martyred after July 22, 346, both in 37 Sapor; Barbashmin, elected during Shahdost's incarceration and arrested himself in July 346, 37 Sapor, but martyred June 11, 347, 38 Sapor; vacancy, if reckoned from the arrest, 19 yrs., 37-56 Sapor, but if from the martyrdom, 18 yrs., 38-56 Sapor. The documents themselves, of course, give us no right to calculate 1 Pers. at 36 Sapor, but if, nevertheless, we do, then Barbashmin's arrest falls in 41 Sapor, his martyrdom in 42 Sapor, and the vacancy ends around 61-62 Sapor 'more or less.' This would still guarantee the essential contention of the present paper, since it demonstrates an occupancy of the see for 9 or 10 yrs. preceding Sapor's death, but would require a readjustment of the 'primary list.'

But, until further study, no use whatever can be made of Era Pers. It embodies a very grave distortion of the chronology, the basis of which is set forth by its own author in the appendix to the acts of Acepsimas.⁸⁹ One passage says that 32 Sapor, the year of Simeon's execution and of the Great Slaughter, was the very beginning of the persecution; another states that

⁸⁸ *Infra*, pp. 86f.

⁸⁹ *MM or.* (cf. *supra*, n. 22) 206f.; 137f. Braun. Where Ass. has 31 Sapor, Braun reads 30 Sapor — (MS var. according to Bedjan's ed.: Skehan). This colophon has occasioned controversy, which need not concern us here, because it does not affect the fact that Era Pers. begins either in 31 or 32 Sapor. The var., 30 Sapor, may be ignored since it has no support in the oldest redaction of Simeon's acts.

the persecution started in 31 (*var. lect.* 30) Sapor, lasted 40 yrs. throughout the rest of his reign and ended with his death after 70 Sapor. The discrepancy between 31 and 32 Sapor recurs on the more ancient version of the respective Passions, 31 Sapor for Simeon's martyrdom, and 32 Sapor for the Great Slaughter.⁹⁰ The other factors in the computation, 40-yr. duration and Sapor's death as limit, are found again in the acts of Badimus, who was martyred in 36 Pers. but his companions were imprisoned about 4 yrs. and set free after Sapor's decease.⁹¹ This chronology contradicts every contemporary source without exception: Aphraates, Chronicle of Jerome, John Chrysostom, minutes of Isaac's and Dadisho's Synods, and, finally, the acts themselves. Aphraates and Jerome put it beyond doubt that the Great Slaughter occurred in 36 Sapor.⁹² The acts of Abdas and Narses show Ardashir II, Sapor's successor, as bitter an enemy of Christianity as ever Sapor II had been.⁹³ The rest of the evidence and its import have been discussed above.

On the other hand, the corruption doesn't seem to affect anything but the year of the martyr's death and even then to proceed on some fixed principle. Thus, the redactor doesn't alter the remark in Barbashmin that allows for approximately only 26 yrs. of continuous persecution — the martyrdom occurs in 7 Pers., followed by a vacancy of about 20 yrs. —, though it flatly contradicts his own calculation.⁹⁴ Again, he guards faithfully the day of Simeon bar Sabbae's death, Friday, Nisan 14, but changes 36 Sapor to 31 or 32 Sapor.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the acts of Barhadbeshabba are assigned to 15 Pers. and of James to 32 Pers., with no martyrdoms in between, and this interval of 17 yrs. corresponds exactly to that from Julian's to Sapor's death (363-80); in other words, though the Era excludes any interruption of the persecution, yet the figures allow for it. Finally, as we saw above, the 6 Pers. of Barbashmin harmonizes well with what we learn from other sources, if 1 Pers. is calculated at 31 or 32 Sapor. Such indications encourage us to hope that, despite the corruption, a close investigation of the documents concerned with Era Pers. might yet yield a dependable chronology.

One factor in the genesis of the 'secondary list' now becomes clear. Its

⁹⁰ *MM or.* 15, 45.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 144, 165, 168 and n. 1; cf. Labourt 80.

⁹² For Aphraates, *supra*, n. 20. Jerome (*Eusebii Pamphili chronici canones latine vertit, adauxit, ad sua tempora produxit S. Eusebius Hieronymus*, ed. J. K. Fotheringham, London 1923, 318) notes under Ol. 280.4 (Oct. 1, 343/44), 2360 Abraham (Oct. 1, 343/44), 7 Constantius (Sept. 9, 343/44), that Sapor persecuted the Christians, i.e., gives, equivalently, 344 as year of Simeon bar Sabbae's death.

⁹³ *MM or.* 99f., 153f.; AS Nov. IV 425-29.

⁹⁴ This discrepancy has always bothered scholars; cf. Westphal 117-19; Labourt 85f., n. 4.

⁹⁵ *MM or.* 31 (Simeon); 129 (Barhadbeshabba). For James, cf. P. Peeters, 'Le « Passionnaire d'Adiabène »' *Anal. Boll.* 43 (1925) 285.

compiler revised the 'primary list' into line with the errors incorporated in Era Pers. But what gave him the idea that Bahram IV immediately succeeded Sapor II and permitted the restoration of the catholicate? This delusion is allied to a peculiarity of some other documents. Thus, the Legend of Bassus⁹⁶ relates that he was martyred on Friday, Iyar 11, 699 Sel. (Oct. 1, 387/88), 76 Sapor (Aug. 22, 384/85). The date corresponds to Friday, Oct. 1, 387, and disagrees with 76 Sapor. The latter may, therefore, represent an artificial synchronism, but, since it should read 2 Sapor III (384/85), it must have been calculated from a list that acknowledged neither Ardashir II nor Sapor III, but continued to number years after the dead monarch. Likewise the History of Karkha-de-Beth-Slokh⁹⁷ speaks of Yezdegerd II as the fifth ruler after Sapor II. The series runs: Sapor II, Ardashir II, Sapor III, Bahram IV, Yezdegerd I, Bahram V, Yezdegerd II. We observe that Yezdegerd II is sixth after Sapor; so the author certainly omits one, either Ardashir or Sapor III. But the notice above, 76 Sapor, would tempt us to think that his 'fifth' includes both ends of the enumeration, i.e., here both Sapor II and Yezdegerd II, and so, that he really means to skip over two kings, Ardashir and Sapor III. He has another striking resemblance to the 'secondary list.' He informs us that Bahram IV granted freedom to the Church of Karkha; the metropolitan Aqballaha, he alleges, had won his special favor by curing his daughter. The parallel with Bokhtisho is certainly suggestive, particularly since we know that his role vis-à-vis Tomarsa is entirely mythical. Both Bassus and the History, then, apparently regard Bahram IV as the immediate successor of Sapor II, but only by a fiction, i.e., they seem not to have acknowledged Ardashir II and Sapor III, but to have given Sapor 79 yrs. (9 dead). Manifestly, these sources have an affinity with the 'secondary list,' and their royal catalogue had a fairly early vogue, since the History of Karkha was composed in the sixth century.

VI.

But, before coming to the origin of the 'primary list,' we had best direct our attention to the repository thereof, the patriarchal chronicles. Westphal⁹⁸ made a penetrating analysis and comparison of Mari and Amri. He found that the latter resembled the former closely, often to the very wording; yet, he detected so many and such important differences as finally to conclude, though with a certain reserve, that the one did not even know the other, but

⁹⁶ *La légende de Mar Bassus martyr persan, suivie de l'histoire de la fondation de son couvent à Apamée*, ed. with intr., tr. and notes by J.-B. Chabot (Paris 1893) 7, 49.

⁹⁷ G. Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer* (Abh. für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 8.3; Leipzig 1880) 49 (Aqballaha), 50. For Bokhtisho, cf. *supra*, p. 61. For the date of the acts, cf. Labourt 55.

⁹⁸ 17-19; cf. *supra*, p. 45.

both used an ecclesiastical history in the form of an annals of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. He points out that Amri never mentions Mari, and asks what reason Amri would have for virtually duplicating the prior work. But, as has already been remarked, ChrS has since been published, and it supplies the missing link. With it, Westphal could have found an answer to his difficulties, and without it, the following solution could not be offered at all.

The fundamental fact to be taken into consideration is the purpose of our writers. They intend simply to draw up a compendium as part of a larger enterprise, BarH, a universal history, and Mari and Amri, encyclopedias.⁹⁹ They do perform their first duty, to continue the older authors up to date; Mari records the catholici down to his contemporary, Abdisho III (1148), and Amri, to his, Yaballaha III (1317). BarH, of course, parallels the two Nestorians only as far as Dadisho (421-56). But a compendium has to cover the whole ground; it can't remain just a supplement, particularly in the days when everything had to be multiplied by hand. The Greek chronicler contented himself with mechanically copying out his predecessor, but the Syrian could not rest satisfied with that; he 'revised and improved.' He changed what he disapproved, kept the rest as it was, and called the result his own. If a man issues a Greek Grammar today, he isn't expected to cudgel his brains for a novel and personal rewording of the rule that an adjective agrees with its noun in gender, number and case, nor is he required to hunt out the authority that first so expressed it in order to give him credit in a footnote. Such formulas are regarded as everybody's property, and it is in much the same light that the Syrian regarded his chronicle tradition. To whom, for instance, was Amri to make acknowledgments? Mari,¹⁰⁰ in the very circumscribed portion of his work studied here, uses ChrS, PsEN, the chronicle or chronicles responsible for the 8-2-5 distribution and the source allied with Socrates, and, finally, appeals at least once to the fundamental authority for the 22-yr. vacancy before Isaac. The process resembles that by which in modern times Funk-Bihlmeyer's *Kirchengeschichte* has developed into Bihlmeyer-Tüchle's, and the reason why the oriental did not mention his model is that his literary conventions differed somewhat, not too much, from our own. Finally, Amri's work narrows down in many places to virtually an index and evidently assumes that the reader will go elsewhere for detail; so it may well be that each of these authors thought of himself not as superseding, but merely as supplementing, his predecessor.

But what end did the annalist have in 'revising'? For Amri, the question answers itself; he made a systematic and studied effort to inject chronological order into the chaos created by Mari and BarH. Mari, first of all, eliminates

⁹⁹ Cf. references to Baumstark and Graf, *supra*, n. 1.

¹⁰⁰ *Supra*, pp. 62, 65, 69.

an occasional inconsistency, but his principal aim is to glorify the past and remove its blemishes. In the earlier centuries, the Persian Church never actually achieved unity; it was plagued by schism. Sensitivity on this score makes Mari twist the history of Papa¹⁰¹ and must have played a considerable role in initiating the myth of Qayuma's resignation. Nothing could be farther from the truth than ChrS' insinuation that the council of 410 restored lasting tranquillity, and, probably to avoid any appearance of disunity, he represents Qayuma as appointing Isaac, and then, by common consent, retiring. But for a catholicus to designate his successor would be a highly irregular proceeding. Besides, Mari objects to even the slight allusion to discord in ChrS, 'conjectures' that 'by common consent' means the synod, transfers the whole transaction to it, decides the issue in accordance with the precedent of Papa and Simeon, and thus at one stroke conforms the incident to canon law and portrays an ideal concord. He takes occasion by the way to magnify Qayuma; no doubt, he had previously selected the 8-2-5 distribution not, obviously, for any chronological advantage, but to enhance Qayuma's courage and stress the vital necessity of a patriarchate; the old man volunteers after fear has kept all others back for two whole years, and risks life rather than have the faithful deprived of a leader. Mari reveals the same tendency in substituting the source allied with Socrates for ChrS' narrative; it gives him the opportunity, first, to relate Maruthas' triumph over the pagan priesthood by his exposure of the hoax, but, above all, to tell how that same hero extolled the glories of the Persian Church to the illustrious General Council of Constantinople.¹⁰² The last detail, in turn, embodies another 'conjecture'; the assembly attended by Maruthas was, of course, the Synod of the Oak, but, manifestly, that couldn't be correct! The glowing tribute thus placed on the lips of Maruthas and paid before so august a gathering to the unsullied orthodoxy and sanctity of the Persian Church on the eve of the Nestorian heresy proved a bit too much for a Monophysite to stomach, even though he, too, claimed Isaac as his own, and BarH expunged it unhesitatingly. Amri as promptly restored it.

Polemic also runs along underneath the variations in the description of the work of the synod. In ChrS, the initiative is entirely western; the precedent, the purpose, the legislation, even the opportunity, all are owed to the West. Mari gets rid of most of this; the canons remain western in inspiration, but become very incidental to the real business and the Fathers are won to them by Maruthas' persuasiveness. In BarH, the Byzantine prelate doesn't persuade but dictates the reform and imposes on the Persian Church its admirable organization, not to speak of some influence on its doctrine as the official

¹⁰¹ 7.31-36; it is Miles that is stricken with paralysis in punishment for his audacity against Papa. For Qayuma's resignation, etc., cf. *supra*, pp. 61-63.

¹⁰² Cf. Westphal 131, who notes that this is propaganda.

representative of the Council of Constantinople. Amri, in rebutting, goes far beyond Mari; he vindicates the complete independence of the Mesopotamian discipline and the entire equality of the patriarchate. The clear, multiple interplay of the narratives leaves no doubt but that Mari used ChrS, that BarH used Mari, while Amri was acquainted with all three. BarH, however, yields no positive evidence of having known ChrS, but only a minute section of his work is considered here.

Of a compendium nobody expects research, yet our compilers have engaged, if not in research, at least in very wide reading of the old chronicles. Otherwise, of course, no 'primary list' could have been reconstructed. But, whereas the 'revision and improvement' so far described discloses a pattern varying with each author, the same cannot be said for the haphazard selection of fragments from the earlier historians.¹⁰³ To mention a few examples, Amri picks out Simeon's chronology and the interval between the truce and edict of toleration; Mari, the 3-yr. vacancy after Shahdost and the 22-yr. interregnum before Isaac; BarH, the existence of the catholicate under Sapor II and the correct schedule of Maruthas' two journeys. Nobody could detect anything systematic in the choice of such items. Yet, they do have one thing in common: though they clearly formed part of the tradition, they are isolated in the sense that they occur in only one of the compendiums. Here, we encounter another prominent trait of our authors, their conservatism. Each evidently has a genuine antiquarian's interest in rescuing from oblivion some hoary notice neglected by his predecessors. Their strange psychology is strikingly illustrated in the behavior of ChrS and Mari recording that Sapor II stopped the persecution after the peace with Jovian but resumed it upon his death; they have rejected the original's statement, they have distorted it beyond recognition, yet they feel impelled to guard some reminiscence of it. Mari has an even queerer display of the same conscientiousness where, after deliberately omitting the truth about Papa and Simeon, he resurrects their relationship in the person of Qayuma and Isaac; perhaps, he attached some canonical importance to the precedent. Unfortunately, they have the same deep respect for the most recent 'conjecture' about a remote event as for an eye-witness' testimony to it. Their handbook had to embody not only the sources but also what was, I presume, regarded in the light of scholarly opinion about them. In 'revising and improving' the compiler would, I suppose, strive to maintain a nice balance between the two; this would often be a matter of purely personal estimate, and would account for the capriciousness in the selection of detail. Still, at times, the design shows through; for instance, Amri delves into the past for the date of Simeon's martyrdom, but he is thereby enabled to correct the chronology

¹⁰³ For the material in this paragraph, cf. *supra*, pp. 49f., 53f., 62, 67, 69f., 71f.

with the least alteration of the received scheme, and, for all we know, he may have taken from some previous work every element in his construction, for instance, the 31-yr. interregnum. Mari, BarH and Amri, all encyclopedists, had splendid libraries at their command, and one wonders if they ever went outside the corpus of chronicles. Did Mari, for instance, extract the 22-yr. interregnum before Isaac from the *Synodicon orientale*? To argue that he couldn't have consulted the collection and associated Qayuma with Isaac's synod would be worse than useless; it would prove at most that he didn't have recourse to it systematically, and, given his eccentricities, this shouldn't surprise us in the least. So it remains possible that he did. However, what we've proven above is that he didn't have to; this item, together with all others like it, fits perfectly with the tradition and originally must have had a place therein.

Even this very valuable contribution of our chroniclers is spoilt by their repeated appeal to 'conjecture.' As a result, full confidence can never be reposed in anything affirmed by them, whether singly or unanimously. Mari alone states that a vacancy preceded Isaac and he's right all by himself; they all agree that Barbashmin held office for 7 yrs., and together they're all wrong. Thus, apropos of the edict of toleration under Sapor II, BarH declares: Sapor did not doubt that Julian's tragic end had been sent by God because of his unjust persecution; consequently, he himself repented of his evil designs, made peace with Jovian and ordered the ruined churches of Persia to be rebuilt. Who gave as Sapor's motive terror at the fate of Julian? BarH or the original authority? I suspect BarH, because he had to refute the fable made up by ChrS-Mari that the magi had guaranteed Sapor everlasting life as a reward for war on Christianity. On the other hand, BarH's version might have been the primitive and the myth invented against it. Yet, common sense would dictate that, at the first threat of the Roman invasion, Sapor should restore freedom of worship, and, as a matter of fact, the Legend of Behnam relates that Mar Mattai and his disciples took refuge in Persia from Julian's persecution.¹⁰⁴ So we could argue further that religious liberty was granted in 362, before the death of the Apostate, that ChrS changed it to minimize the good in Sapor's action, and BarH followed suit to obtain his rebuttal. In short, these late Syriac chroniclers exercise no critical discernment, and no statement of theirs can ever elicit, unsupported, an unqualified assent.

The medieval Syriac patriarchal chronicle, then, was composed as a handy compendium, the writer of which not only continued his predecessor, but 'revised and improved,' often by going back to the older annals, but often, too, by 'conjecture,' thus intermingling fiction and fact indistinguishably.

¹⁰⁴ Hoffmann 17.

Nevertheless, the conservatism and ingrowth of the later school of encyclopedists guarded the genuine tradition more jealously than the boldness and wider scope of such innovators as the creator of the 'secondary list.' Most of the corruptions crept in during the earlier accumulation of the material from a variety of sources that we cannot trace, and also during the transformations of format. We have met with one blunder occasioned by the combination of the ecclesiastical with secular annals. Errors must have been greatly multiplied with the first efforts to reduce the three- or four-columned chronicle to a continuous narrative.¹⁰⁵

All these factors have to be weighed in determining the origin of the 'primary list': Simeon bar Sabbae, consecration (synod against Papa), 6 Sapor II (314/15); catholicus, 18 yrs., 18 Sapor II (death of Papa) to 36 Sapor II (326/27-344/45); Shahdost-Barbashmin-vacancy, 20 yrs., 36-56 Sapor II (344/45-364/65); Tomarsa, 8 yrs., 56-64 Sapor II (364/65-372/73); Qayuma, 7 yrs., 64 Sapor II to 1 Ardashir II (372/73-379/80); vacancy, 22 yrs., 1 Ardashir II to 3 Yezdegerd I (379/80-401/2); Isaac, from 3 Yezdegerd I (401/2). This restoration certainly constitutes the starting point of the 'secondary list,' i.e., it marks the ultimate limit of the medieval chronicle tradition. But how much corruption had crept in before it arrived at this stage? Perhaps none, but we cannot be sure. Thus, though the vacancies preceding and following Sapor II must have had approximately equal length, still the 20 yrs. 'more or less' of Barbashmin's Passion sound disquietingly like the 22-yr. interval before Isaac; besides, one would expect, since the persecution burst out immediately upon the death of Sapor II, that the then occupant of the see might have died a martyr; in addition, Mari does speak of 22 yrs. from Barbashmin to Yezdegerd I, and though this may, and I have taken for granted above that it does, mean nothing, again, it can mean everything, since it is always possible that it is a very ancient fragment; finally, all our writers assign Barbashmin that baffling 7-yr. term, and this is the same as Qayuma's. On the other hand, Qayuma is not a personality, he is a wax figure, draped in extreme age and decrepitude to furnish a pretext for resignation, and he functions chiefly, to rephrase Mari a little less romantically, to plug up a gap in the list. In short, the primitive arrangement may have been Simeon-Shahdost-vacancy-Tomarsa-Barbashmin-22-yr. vacancy-Isaac or several others, and the only hope of control lies in a solution of Era Pers.¹⁰⁶

But Seleucia-Ctesiphon, like other important sees, must have had its *depositio episcoporum*, and we need not hesitate to assume that it formed

¹⁰⁵ Daniel bar Maryam, principal source of ChrS, was in four parts; cf Graf 195.

¹⁰⁶ However, because of the peculiar dating, 2 Pers. (cf. *supra*, p. 86), it seems to me much more likely that Shahdost is in the wrong order. Then the list would run: Simeon-Barbashmin-20-yr. vacancy-Tomarsa-Qayuma-Shahdost-22-yr. vacancy-Isaac.

the nucleus of the ecclesiastical annals. Contemporaries, Aphraates, Jerome, John Chrysostom, synod of Dadisho (excluding the acts of the martyrs), inform us that Simeon suffered in 36 Sapor II; that for 22 yrs. immediately preceding Isaac persecution raged and no patriarch sat on the throne; that, however, the see was occupied in the last years of Sapor II. So far our reconstruction represents the authentic catalogue beyond all fear of contradiction. The two remaining dates in Simeon's career are confirmed by Miles' Life and a report of ChrArb carrying every sign of genuine antiquity; so they can be accepted without misgiving. The year, 3 Yezdegerd, for Isaac's accession does not rest upon the same high authority as the foregoing, but can be regarded as practically certain. Finally, we have not the slightest reason to suspect as spurious Shahdost and Barbashmin, guaranteed, as they are, by their acts. To this extent, the 'primary list' preserves the *depositio episcoporum* of the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. But, the exact position of Shahdost and Barbashmin, the date of Sapor II's edict of toleration, the tenure and names of Tomarsa and Qayuma — all these items depend solely on the chronicles, and must, until further investigation, remain provisional.

VII.

Before concluding, a word must be said on the authenticity of Dadisho's synod, one of the principal sources of the present study. Doubts have been cast upon it for what seem to me very paltry reasons. Some bishops had opposed the reinstitution of the catholicate from the beginning and had been excommunicated by Isaac, Yahbalaha, and finally Dadisho himself.¹⁰⁷ By calumny they had succeeded in having Dadisho imprisoned and tortured, and, as a consequence, he had withdrawn from Seleucia-Ctesiphon and resigned.¹⁰⁸ His supporters had then assembled to induce him to reassume the catholicate and return to his see. In the course of the council, Agapetus delivered a long address, recalling the history of the previous revolts against Papa, Isaac and Yahbalaha, and showing in every instance how the Western Fathers, on appeal, had upheld the primate and condignly punished his enemies. The speaker also read the letters of the Western Fathers pertaining to each case, but, of these, the minutes preserve only an excerpt from that to Papa, which decrees that the catholicus cannot be tried by a synod of his subordinates; the epistle further goes on to state that, according to the western discipline, a bishop who thinks himself wronged has only one recourse — he may present his case to the annual synod, and, if his colleagues agree

¹⁰⁷ *Syn. or.* 287-97. Cf. *supra*, pp. 54f., 76, for the passages on Papa and Isaac.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 286: The bishops asked Dadisho to return to his see, put himself again at the head of the Church and resume the direction of Christ's flock. This seems to me to imply that he resigned, as it does also to Labourt 121, but not to Westphal 162.

with him, they may then respectfully petition the patriarch in his favor. As a result of this address, the assembly voted that thereafter no one had any right to appeal to Antioch, but had to submit to the catholicus' judgment as final.

The minutes presuppose that Papa had been made catholicus before the synod held against him under Miles. This is undoubtedly right. As we see from ChrArb, the Persian hierarchy was divided over the question whether to create an autonomous national Church or continue the bond with the Roman Empire.¹⁰⁹ Obviously, too, the latter party embraced also all those who wanted to preserve local independence; clearly, Antioch, at a distance and with communications severely restricted in peace and cut off altogether during the almost continuous wars, could not exercise any real control, whereas Seleucia-Ctesiphon very definitely could. Papa constituted himself leader of the movement for a strongly centralized and self-sufficient polity. He promoted his side by taking advantage of his position in the capital; no doubt, he laid it down as a condition for obtaining favors from the court that the bishop concerned should acknowledge his supremacy. He could not proceed very far with such designs without arousing strong opposition. Alarmed, he appealed to Antioch for the necessary authority and received it. This is not only the narrative of ChrArb and the implication of Dadisho's synod, it has to be presumed in any case; it is incredible that he deposed bishops and consecrated others in their stead without a shadow of canonical right.¹¹⁰ He exercised his new powers, however, as Miles' acts tell us, so arbitrarily and tyrannically as to alienate everybody, not only the hierarchy but even his own clergy and faithful. That this has a great deal of truth in it is proven by the curious decision of the Western Fathers; on the one hand, they vindicated the principle of authority, but, on the other, in the hope, apparently, that Simeon would conduct himself more tactfully, they designated as Papa's successor the very man that the opposition had chosen as its own candidate. Nevertheless, exactly the same troubles recurred under Simeon and again, upon the revival of the catholicate, under Isaac, Yahbalaha, and Dadisho, and it was precisely to cure the evil that Isaac called the assembly of 410 and introduced the Western legislation of regular synods. But the gathering went far beyond that.¹¹¹ Apparently upon the advice of the Western Fathers, it put Yezdegerd in the same relation to Persian Christianity

¹⁰⁹ The pertinent passages have been summarized *supra*, pp. 54-56.

¹¹⁰ This is what Mari 7.30f. means by saying that he was accused of ordaining two bishops for one see. There isn't the slightest doubt that this accusation is true, since the acts of Simeon mention two simultaneous bishops of Gundeshapur, Gadyabh and Sabina, and we know that the former consecrated Miles, so the latter must have been Papa's partisan; cf. Braun (cf. *supra*, n. 22) 5, and *MM* or. 70.

¹¹¹ *Syn. or.* 261, 269f., 273.

as the Emperor stood to the Byzantine, and thus virtually created an autonomous national Church for at least his reign. It thus marks an outstanding triumph of the party that espoused self-government with strong centralization in the capital see and independence of the Roman Empire. It was inevitable that, sooner or later, the development should culminate in the severance of all ties with the West by abolition of the appeal to Antioch, as happened in Dadisho's council.

This exposition answers Assemani's¹¹² objection that the separation could not have come until the Iranian Church had turned Nestorian; it was inherent in the situation and already existed, to all intents and purposes, under Yezdegerd I. A much more serious criticism is the apparent inconsistency of Agapetus' demonstration that appeal had always resulted in victory for the catholicus as compared with the conclusion to abolish, therefore, the right of appeal.¹¹³ Such a statement hardly represents the reasoning fairly. Agapetus sums up his own argument as follows: Every time that schism existed among us, the Western Fathers have vindicated and sustained the patriarchate; likewise, they have delivered us from the persecutions of the magi; now, however, we are burdened by both oppression and discord, and they cannot come to our rescue; we must, therefore, stand on our own feet; if we abandon the patriarchate, we are lost beyond hope; we must, consequently, uphold the patriarchate; Antioch has always done so by steadfastly maintaining the rule that the patriarch is supreme, and, right or wrong, cannot be tried and deposed by his subordinates; if we are to come safely through the present crisis, we can do so only by accepting the very same principle of authority as absolute and unquestionable, and, instead of depending on Antioch to assert it, as we have in the past, we must here and now assert it ourselves, by our own undeviating adherence to it and by the solid phalanx of our corporate authority. In short, Agapetus contends that the salvation of the Church demanded an immediate decision, that that immediate decision could not be obtained by an appeal to Antioch, that the episcopate had to assume the responsibility itself, and, if they did, they had to abolish the appeal to Antioch, because otherwise the whole matter would still remain undecided; that, on the other hand, if they rendered the decision in accordance with the precedent followed inflexibly by Antioch, they would simply be doing what, in any case, the appeal would itself accomplish.¹¹⁴ Nobody can find fault with the logic of this train of thought,

¹¹² BO (*supra*, n. 1) IV 176f. His chronological objections are obsolete, as also others'; cf. O. Braun, *Buch des Synhados* (Stuttgart-Vienna 1900) 51, n. 1, 53, n. 3, and Chabot, *Syn. or.* 290, nn. 1, 3. The latter two put Miles' martyrdom after 31 Sapor, but cf. *supra*, n. 39.

¹¹³ Braun, *Synh.* 56, n. 1; Labourt 125f., n. 1; Westphal 162.

¹¹⁴ According to Labourt 124, Agapetus' assertion that conditions prevented the Western Fathers from concerning themselves with Persia was merely a pretext, and the real grounds

though one might, of course, question the implicit premise that necessity gave the right.

The acts have also been condemned on the ground that they incorporate forgeries made long after the synod was held. According to one of these, at the beginning of the third century, when Ahadabui went to Antioch to be consecrated, his companion was seized as a spy and put to death, and he himself escaped only by precipitous flight.¹¹⁵ As a result, the four patriarchs of the West met and erected Seleucia-Ctesiphon, which the letter represents as even then the primatial see of the East, into a fifth independent and equal patriarchate. This legend is taken for granted as the background of a whole spurious correspondence concerning Papa's invalid deposition and one item in the collection purports to be the decree of the Western Fathers vindicating him.¹¹⁶ Modern scholars without exception state that the letter of the Fathers in the synod of Dadisho is also a forgery, but they fail to give any proof.¹¹⁷ Perhaps the ground for their suspicions may be that the quotation in the minutes portrays Papa as catholicus before his condemnation in Miles' assembly; but this difficulty has already been disposed of. At all events, to my mind, even to suggest that the letter or any other essential matter in the record depends in any way on the fake documents described above is preposterous. In the first place, the synod never makes the slightest allusion to the myth of the four patriarchs; secondly, it affirms clearly and unmistakably — and that, too, in the letter of the Western Fathers itself — that Papa was the first primate of Persia, not some earlier bishop; thirdly, it never puts him on a level with the other patriarchs but regards him as subordinate to Antioch, as the whole purpose of the meeting shows: it was this assembly

were different. This, whether true or false, does not affect the issue here. However, I might point out that (1) it is the only reason given and it convinced the rest of the bishops, though only after some hesitation, and (2) there seems to be something faulty with Labourt's chronology. On p. 120 n. 3, he dates Dadisho's imprisonment in 422, but this forces the text, which requires 423; cf. Chabot, *Syn. or.* 288 n. 1.

¹¹⁵ Abdisho, *Coll. can.* tr. A. Assemani (Scr. vett. nova coll. 10, ed. A. Mai; Rome 1838) 161-63; cf. Labourt 11f.

¹¹⁶ Braun, *Briefw.* (cf. *supra*, n. 42) 178-82, esp. 181f.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *supra*, n. 112; Westphal 56, 162f.; Labourt 21 n. 1, 125f. n. 1. With reference to Labourt's parallelisms, that between Papa-Miles and Yahbalaha-Mana does not exist in Mari, as he asserts; cf. *supra*, n. 101. As to Agapetus, Westphal is undoubtedly correct for the reasons given above. Chabot, *Syn. or.* 286, n. 3, thinks that the letter of the four patriarchs is referred to in the opening words of the synod: 'By the agreement and advice of saints, confessors, archbishops, doctors by their works, illustrious and martyrs by their sufferings..., the gift of the patriarchate has been given and confirmed to the great church of Koke.' If he finds the allusion in the use of the word 'patriarchate,' it means no more than the application of 'catholicus' to Isaac; cf. Westphal 135. In a canonical collection such as this, substitutions of current titles for the original terminology would be bound to occur almost subconsciously, and would prove little or nothing.

that virtually created the patriarchate of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. In fact, it is manifest that the interrelationship is the opposite; it is the forgeries that are based on the acts, not vice versa. Obviously, the hierarchy of Persia didn't have the vestige of a right to declare itself independent of Antioch, and the epistle of the four patriarchs was made up for no other reason than to eradicate this fundamental flaw in Seleucia's patriarchal title.

Furthermore, a number of other proofs can be adduced in favor of the minutes: (1) their perfect agreement with contemporary sources has been established above; (2) in addition, that the primacy had been bestowed on Seleucia-Ctesiphon prior to 344 is clear from Aphraates, and he also hints that it had been held by Papa;¹¹⁸ (3) we have a sample of the type of invention in favor of Seleucia-Ctesiphon in the legend above of Ahadabui and his martyred companion, and we have also seen how the chroniclers strove to minimize or eliminate entirely the element of discord and schism in their history; in the light of such conduct, is it even remotely credible that the sordid tale of intrigue and lies and petty jealousy now found in the acts of Dadisho would ever have been concocted by any Nestorian annalist, particularly as a series of steps leading up finally to the institution of the patriarchate?

VIII.

We shall now summarize and conclude this whole paper. To determine the chronology of the metropolitans of the fourth century, we have investigated systematically the patriarchal lists. This was an essential preliminary, even if it had yielded no positive results, since, though Westphal had already done it, ChrS had meanwhile been discovered¹¹⁹ and some final decision had to be reached as to their merits. The result discloses two catalogues, one the immediate parent of all the chronicles, which has been called here the 'secondary list,' and the other, the remoter ancestor of both the 'secondary list' and of scattered fragments of a different arrangement, called here the 'primary list.' A comparison of both with contemporary or near-contemporary sources proves the 'primary list' of high authority, the 'secondary list' entirely corrupt. It further reveals that the 'secondary list' has revised the 'primary list' partly by importing from the Syriac acts of the Persian martyrs the errors of *Era Pers.* (which is thereby demonstrated to contain grave, but, one may hope, not incurable, distortions of the truth), and partly by resorting, seemingly, to an alien series of some northwestern see to supply a new chronological framework for Seleucia-Ctesiphon. We have demonstrated that the universally received chronology is entirely wrong and must be re-

¹¹⁸ Cf. *supra*, n. 39.

¹¹⁹ Cf. *supra*, p. 46.

jected; that what has always been accepted as axiomatic, the duration of the persecution throughout the time of Sapor II, is false, but, on the contrary, there was a long period of peace towards the end of his reign; that the whole story of Qayuma's resignation and its circumstances is a pure fable, and, actually, a 22-yr. vacancy occurred prior to Isaac's accession. The study has also given a much clearer account of the first decade of Yezdegerd I, the relations between Rome and Persia, Chrysostom's importance for the formation of the Persian Church, Maruthas' role, Isaac's catholicate, the history and chronology of events leading up to the all-important Council of 410, in addition to throwing new light on a number of other details, Papa's career, etc. We have proven the close interrelationship of the patriarchal chronicles and gained a new insight into the aims and methods of their compilers. Finally, though we have not recovered in all its detail the *depositio episcoporum* of the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon during the fourth century, we may at least regard the following as part of the authentic catalogue: Simeon, consecration (synod against Papa), 6 Sapor II (314/15); catholicus, 18 yrs., 18 Sapor II (death of Papa) to 36 Sapor II (326/27-344/45); Shahdost-Barbashmin-vacancy (perhaps not precisely in this order), 36 Sapor II to some unknown date before Sapor's death; some metropolitan or metropolitans, perhaps Barbashmin only, perhaps Tomarsa and Barbashmin, perhaps Tomarsa, Qayuma and Shahdost, to the death of Sapor II (379/80); vacancy, 22 yrs., 1 Ardashir II to 3 Yezdegerd I (379/80-401/2); Isaac, from 3 Yezdegerd I (401/2).

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